100 ANGLO-FRENCH SEA BATTLES

from 1213 to 1940

JEAN C. CASTEX

I DEDICATE THESE PAGES TO THE MEMORY OF ALL
THE SAILORS KILLED OR WOUNDED IN THESE
ETERNAL WARS ONLY INTENDED
FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF
WEALTHY WAR-
PROFITEERS.

100

ANGLO-FRENCH SEA BATTLES

FROM 1213 TO 1940

Jean C Castex

Title : 100 Anglo-French Sea Battle from 1213 to 1940

Author: Jean-Claude Castex, (1941-)

Cover: *Battle of Hudson Bay, 1697*, Oil on canvas by Peter Rindlisbacher, contemporary Canadian painter (24cm x 36cm). At dawn near the mouth of the Hayes River, on September 5th, 1697, the French ship Le PÉLICAN 44, commanded by Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, encountered an English squadron consisting of The HAMPSHIRE 46, The DERING 36 guns and The ROYAL HUDSON BAY 32. The wind was brisk from the West-South-West, and the firing began at 9:30 AM. The painting shows the ships steering South-East at the height of the battle about mid-day. For reasons still unclear, The HAMPSHIRE capsized and sank. The ROYAL HUDSON BAY surrendered, and The DERING was able to elude Le PÉLICAN in a subsequent chase.

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Naval battle of Damme.

Date of action: 1213.

Location: Damme, seaport located at 8 km from Bruges on the canal of Bruges which goes from this city to Moerkerke. In the 13th century, Damme was located on the edge of a sea inlet that is now silted up. Geographical coordinates: approximately 51° 15' North latitude and 03° 17' East.

Conflict: Campaign of Flanders by Philippe II of France. English invasion.

Background: In January 1213, the Pope placed England outside of Christendom. Very happy, the King Philip of France prepared in his quality of suzerain of the King of England[1], John Lackland [Jean-sans-Terre], to go remove his crown from him "in the name of the Pope" to give it "to someone worthy of it". He decided to give the crown to Prince Louis of France who kept his rights to the throne of France. Philip Augustus gathered an army and a fleet of transports in Boulogne on May 8, 1213. But a papal legate appeared, forbidding the invasion, because John Lackland had submitted in extremis. On May 22, 1213, Philippe Auguste, greatly disappointed, decided to use this now useless army against Flanders, because the Comte de Flanders, Ferrand, had refused to participate in the expedition against John Lackland, Flanders and England having solid economic links[2]. He had, on the contrary, signed a secret treaty of mutual assistance with England. Philip sent his fleet to Damme and began to conquer the Flemish cities. Flanders solicited the help of its ally, John Lackland (John without Land or Jean-sans-Terre), who dispatched the English fleet to Damme.

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[1] ●By the duchy of Normandy; the duke of Normandy, who happened to be king of England, owed homage

[2] ●The wool. The sheep had been introduced in England by the monks of the French Order de Citeaux.

Military Leaders in Command ●*English*: The English fleet was commanded by William Long-Sword of Salisbury, assisted by Renaud de Dammartin[3] and Hugues de Boves. ●*French*: Robert de Poissy.

Military Forces involved ●The French transport fleet consisted of 1,700 ships and boats of all sizes, manned by fishermen and traders. ●The English fleet consisted of 500 ships.

Strategy or Tactics: Surprise was the main factor in this victory, since most of the French crews were on land[4]. The 1,700 French transports of all tonnages were anchored in the port of Damme; 400 transports had to be left outside of the (too small) port.

Summary of the Action: When Salisbury unexpectedly appeared in front of Damme, he found the French ships at anchor. The crews had gone ashore. The ships and boats were anchored in the harbor and along the coast. A hundred boats had even been pulled ashore on the beaches. Salisbury and his fleet towed 300 empty boats anchored outside the harbor and set fire to others they could not tow, after having carefully looted them. Then the English ships that served as protection and, therefore, were not towing anything, entered the harbor to attack the ships at anchor, in which the French crews were beginning to reembark. They were coming back from where they pillaged the Flemish villages. In spite of their very reduced crews, the French ships held the English ships in check, so much so that the English had to lined up in battle on each side of the harbor to take the French ships in a pincer movement. Assailed from all sides, the French of Robert de Poissy, not only resisted, but caused heavy losses to the English. Finally, resistance gradually ceased in the harbor.

Casualties & Losses ● The losses are unknown, but they were heavy on both sides.

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[3] ●He was Count of Boulogne.

[4] ●As at the Battle of Aboukir (1798) and the Battle of Chesapeake Bay (1781). Negligence would not be sanctioned in the Marine Royale as in the Army. The Royal Navy was known for harshly punishing its defaulting admirals.

Consequence of this French defeat: This English victory sealed the alliance between the Anglo-Flemish forces. By learning the ruin of its fleet, Philip II, King of France, raised the siege of Ghent, arrived with forced march towards Damme, fell on the English expeditionary force which had landed, defeated it and made a great number of prisoners.

Sources & Readings ● A Study on the life and world of William Longue-Épée [Long Sword], Duke of Normandy, Paris, 1893. ●The Conspiracy of the Norman Barons against William the Bastard, Duke of Normandy, MXLVII. Translated from the French by Abbé E. Le Cointe, London, 1883. ●Un grand Feudataire, Renaud de Dammartin et la coalition de Bouvines, contribution à l'étude du règne de Philippe-Auguste..., Henri Malo, Paris; H. Champion, Paris, undated. ●Monarchy and feudalism: 1137-1213, André Castelot, Alain Decaux, Marcel Jullian, Jacques Levron, Robert Laffont, 1989. ●Philippe- Auguste and his Century. Historical and detailed Table of the Wars of this Sovereign, his Conquests and the great Events that Occurred during his Reign, J.-B.-J. Champagnac, P.-C. Lehuby, Paris.

Naval Battle of South Foreland.

Other name: Battle of Cinq-Isles

Date of Action: 24 August 1217.

Location: Cape South Foreland battlefield is located off St Margarets Bay, a few miles northeast of Dover. Geographical coordinates: 51º15' North & 1º39' East.

Conflict: English Civil War or War of the British Succession, 1216-1217- French participation.

Background: The English barons, exasperated against their King John Lackland [Jean-sans-Terre], had sent a deputation to prince Louis of France to offer him the throne of England. But the king John having died on October 12th, 1216, a part of the English barons did not want any more Louis of France. They preferred Henry [III], son of John Lackland. The two factions met at Lincoln for a final battle that went badly for the Franco-English. Defeated at Lincoln, Louis of France asked for reinforcements in France.

Military Leaders in command ●The Anglo-Poitevin squadron was led by Hubert de Bourg, governor of Dover, and Philippe d'Aubigné, governor of Jersey. ●The French squadron was commanded by the pirate Eustace Le Moine, hated by the English for his destructive raids on English cities. His defeat would cost him his life.

Military Forces involved ●*Anglo-Poitevins*[5]: 18 warships and about 20 armed barks. ●*Franco-English*: 1 warship escorted 70 small transports of troops and logistical. The French and English warships[6] were also heavily laden with men and horses.

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[5] ●Poitou had just been re-conquered by the French, but most of the Poitou ships were still part of the English fleet.
[6] ●Some English barons remained supporters of Prince Louis of France.

Strategy or tactics: Hubert de Bourg, who commanded the Anglo-Poitevin squadron, invented a naval tactic that was to become the rule until the end of the sailing navy: to try to win the wind over the enemy in order to keep the initiative and to attack the enemy at the desired moment, while the latter, under wind, was obliged to undergo. On this occasion, it was only a question of being able to blind the French with quicklime; but the idea was found. Sailors armed with bags of quicklime were installed in the masts. At the moment of boarding, they blinded the French by throwing handfuls of lime into the wind. Another tactical innovation on the part of Hubert de Bourg was the idea of posting Philippe d'Aubigné's archers in the masts and on the decks.

Summary of the action: During the night of August 23-24, 1217, 70 small transports of troops and logistical supplies left Calais, escorted by 10 warships commanded by the pirate Eustace Le Moine. The breeze was blowing from the SSE. Suddenly, the Anglo-Poitevin squadron appeared and seemed to avoid combat despite the jeers of the French. It sailed towards the East and let the French squadron pass; then when the wind was in their favor, they turned lof for lof and launched themselves to board the French. In fact, Hubert de Bourg wanted to win the wind over the enemy; a tactic still unknown, but intended in this precise case to send a cloud of quicklime into the eyes of the French at the critical moment of the boarding. The French ships, overloaded with men, horses and supplies, were extremely deep beyond the waterline and difficult to handle.

At the signal, therefore, the Anglo-Poitevin ships threw themselves on the French and, just before the boarding, a cloud of quicklime fell from the masts and the wind threw it on the French combatants whose eyes were cruelly burned, while the archers and crossbowmen mowed down the French decks. It was Renaud Païen, a sergeant from Guernsey, who first boarded the French flagship. Lime was a real incapacitator, as effective as modern industrial bombs. As soon as the French were completely blinded, the Anglo-Poitevins jumped on board and

began to slaughter them with daggers, pikes and axes. Some of the ships, with their rather stiff prows, rammed the troop transports, which immediately began to list. The Anglo-Poitevins then jumped almost unopposed on the French ships, cut the ropes with their boarding axes and the sails fell on the survivors "caught in the net like birds". It was a huge massacre; the decks were covered with blood and shredded bodies. The flagship of Eustace the pirate, so overloaded that it was too low to use its trebuchet, was attacked and taken by four or five Poitevin ships. They wanted his head.

Casualties & Losses ● An English abbot estimated French losses at 125 knights, 33 crossbowmen, 146 mounted sergeants, and 833 foot sergeants[7]. ●Anglo-Poitevin losses are unknown.

Consequence of this Franco-English defeat: This defeat pushed Prince Louis of France and his English party to abandonate the latter's claims to the English throne. Louis signed the peace on September 11th. *He agreed to give up not only his claim to the throne, but his conquests and, in particular, the Channel Islands taken from the English*. The occupation of England had lasted 16 months.

As the participation of the Poitevins in the English ranks was strong and the loyalty of this province (Poitou) to France left something to be desired since the too recent French conquest of Philip-Augustus, Louis [VIII] of France decided to reconquer it.

Sources & Readings ●Roman of Eustace Le Moine, famous pirate of the XIII century, Le Moine, Paris, 1834. ●The Pirates, Douglas Botting and the editors of Time-Life Books,

[7] ●This figure is probably exaggerated, as it would have represented the entirety of the French reinforcements. According to the custom of the time, the knights were saved for ransom and all the others immediately massacred or drowned: But the exaggeration in the figures shows the enthusiasm of the English loyalists for this victory. Barely fifteen French ships were able to return in disorder to Calais. Knowing that he was wanted for all his misdeeds in England, the pirate Eustace disguised himself, was recognized, tried in vain to buy his freedom and was finally beheaded. His head was taken to all the English ports that he had devastated during his long career.

Alexandria [Va.], Time-Life Books, 1978. ●L'Aventure maritime: corsairs, freebooters, pirates and barbarians: synthesis of a legend, Gérard A. Jaeger, D.U.C., Paris, 1986. ●Carteret: Lords and the Channel Islands, René Le Tenneur and Jean Barros, Publications R, Le Tenneur, Paris, 1986. ●The Reign of King John, Sidney Painter, Arno Press, New Yotk, Johns Hopkins University Press Reprints 1979, copy 1949. ●The Minority of Henry III of England, David Arscott Carpenter, Berkeley; Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1990.

Naval Battle of Arnemuiden.

Date of action: 23 September 1338. *First naval battle of the Hundred Years War*.

Location: Arnemuiden, near Middelburg, Walcheren Island, The Netherlands, Geographic coordinates: 51° 51' north & 03°69'East. Arnemuiden was an important port on the island of Walcheren. Today, the city is isolated from the sea by polders.

Conflict: Beginning of the Hundred Years' War, 1337-1453.

Background: In the time of Henry I of England, the youngest son of William the Conqueror, a new French order of reforming monks in England. It originated in the center-east of France, at the monastery of *Cîteaux.* The monks were known as Cistercians, from the old Latin name of the village. Working the land was one of their ideals and the French Cistercians began an extensive program to reclaim the marshy soils of the English countryside, as well as building roads and mills. They discovered that sheep farming could become extremely profitable and by the reign[8] of Henry II. England had become an important country in the field of wool export[9].

On 21st September 1338, the French admirals Quiéret and Béhuchet went to the coast of Flanders, where the King of England had been since mid-July with 11,600combatants transported by 200vessels. On landing in Middleburg, the King had realized with astonishment that he had broken his word with his Flemish allies. Instead of the 20,000 bales of wool promised to re-establish the Flemish cloth industry, Edward III had only 2,500. He sent for the rest as quickly as possible to make up the deficit. This was what the French squadron came to intercept.

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[8] ●1133-1189 ; this King of England was born in Le Mans and died near Tours.
[9] ●Isaac Asimov, *The Shaping of England*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. 1969. P. 223.

Military Leaders in command ● Admirals Hugues Quiéret and Nicolas Béhuchet commanded the French ships. ●The English were commanded by John Kingston, having his mark on The CHRISTOFER.

Military Forces involved ●French: 48 galleys, 2 caraques and some vessels armed with artillery, according to an English estimate. ●English: 5 large naves (cogs) armed with artillery, 1000 crewmen.

Strategy or Tactics : *Arnemuiden was the first naval combat with fire artillery.*

At the beginning of the Hundred Years War, it is good to take a look at the two armies involved: the French army oriented towards the *offensive* and the English army oriented towards the *defensive,* tactically.

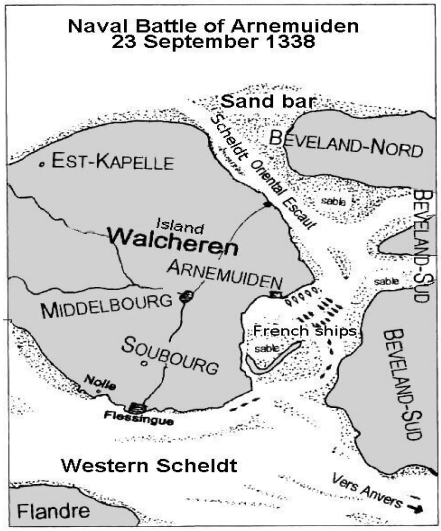
THE ENGLISH ARMY

● Defensively oriented.
● Compulsory military service for all within the kingdom.
● National and professional army.
● Well-paid soldiers.
● [infantry largely predominant: light infantry: archers and ribauds [or brigands].
● The brigands were destined to finish off the mounted French horsemen.
● The people-at-arms [hommes d'armes] fought on horseback only exceptionally. There was therefore no contempt of the rider for the infantryman.
● Archers were recruited among people from the communes who were obliged to train in archery; they were therefore snipers.
● The archers were armed with Welsh longbows made of yew wood that varied according to the height of the soldier, between 1.90 m and 2 m. A case protected the spare bows and arrows from rain.

● The archer was also equipped with a 3.3 m stake used to make an anti-cavalry harrow.
● The arrows were 183 cm high and the fastest archers could shoot one every five seconds.

THE FRENCH ARMY

● Offensively oriented.
● Any tactic that was not a frontal assault was considered cowardice by the French.



● The chiefs and the King of France were on the front line of the assaults. But, in fact, they risked less death than others, because capturing the King or constable alive allowed to obtain a huge ransom.
● Throwing weapons [bows, crossbows] was considered c*owardly weapons*, since the crossbowman or archer could kill from a distance without much danger for themselves.
● Crossbowmen, archers and all infantry[10] were despised by the [noble] knights, who considered that they were of little use. Crossbowmen were often foreign mercenaries [Genoese]. They dressed and armed themselves as best they could. It was a disparate rush sometimes armed with knives. They only served to make numbers and no one bothered to organize them. Moreover, their dead were not even counted, their wounded were

[10] ●Commun or ordinary people.

abandoned on the battlefield and all prisoners of these social class and formations passed by the sword.

● The crossbowman was heavily loaded (40 kg) and his steps were impeded and exhausting. The crossbow alone weighed 10 kg.

Summary of the action: While bypassing the island of Walcheren, the French squadron discovered in the cove of Arnemuiden, near Middelburg, five large English ships which had just arrived with the huge load of wool intended to calm the anger of the Flemish. They were the most beautiful warships of the King of England Edward III: The CRISTOFER, The EDGARD, The CATHERINE, The ROSE, The SAINT MARY. Some of the crews were ashore. On the other hand, The CHRISTOFER was equipped with formidable weapons: three iron cannons and another arm, analogous to the "iron pots" embarked that same year on one of Béhuchet's ships. *This was the first naval combat with artillery*. This explains the great impact given to this battle. The struggle was fierce. The captain, John Kingston, stood up for a whole day. The other English ships had long since capitulated. The CHRISTOFER resisted, seeing that the prisoners were massacred as they went along. A final assault triumphed over the overwhelmed Anglais under the numbers. The French sailors, exasperated by their fierce resilience, massacred the survivors before the eyes of the French admirals who paid for this barbaric act two years later at the Battle of L'Écluse [the Sluis].

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: about 900 men killed. ●*English*: 1,000 killed, a rich cargo of wool. The five naves were taken to Calais and integrated into the French fleet.

Consequence of this English defeat: It was a bellows for the King of England. It undoubtedly helped to trigger the Hundred Years War.

Sources & Readings: ●Chroniques de Flandre, de Hainaut et d'Artois au temps de la guerre de Cent Ans (1328-1390), Jean Froissart, translation by D. Poulet, Impi, le Limonaire, Troesnes, 1987. ●Istoire et croniques de Flandres d'après les

textes de divers manuscrits, baron Kervyn de Lettenhove, F. Hayez, Imprimeur, Bruxelles, 1879. ●The First Valois and the beginning of the One Hundred Year War, Alfred Coville, Paris, J. Tallandier, 1980. ●The Preliminaries of the Hundred Years War, the Papacy, France and England, 1328-1342, Eugène Déprez, Slarkine, Geneva, 1975.

Naval Battle of The Sluys.

Other name: Battle of the Sluis or L'Écluse.

Date of action: 24 June 1340.

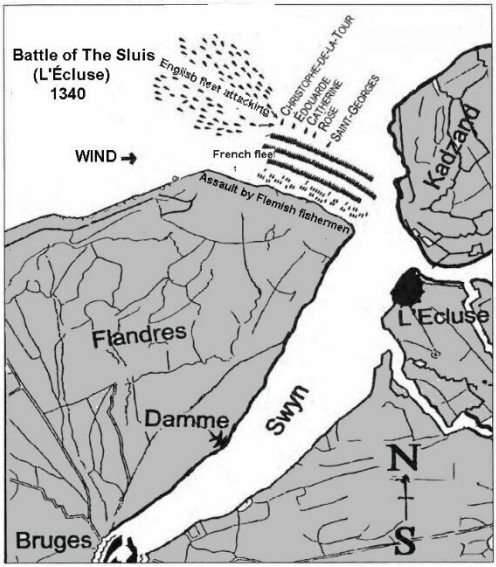
Location: The estuary of the Zwyn River in the Netherlands. The Zwyn is today a thin stream that serves as a border between Belgium and the Netherlands. Sluis or Sluys, [L'Écluse in Dutch], Dammes and Bruges are today very far from the sea. Geographical mean coordinates: 51° 18' North and 03° 24' East.

Conflict: Hundred Years War, 1337-1453. War of Succession of France. First campaigns.

Context: At the death of the King of France, Philippe Le Bel [1328], the crown passed to his grand nephew who became Philip VI. But Edward III Plantagenêt, King of England since the previous year, and grandson of Philip the Fair [le Bel], *rightly claimed with good reason the crown of France, as being before Philip in the order succession of the pretenders*. This injustice with regard to the King of England made that the war became inevitable. As for fifteen years, the French navy had been neglected, Philip VI asked Admiral Quiéret to organize a framework to bring Edward III to reason. Quiéret and Béhucher began to cross the seas in order to seize large ships —English for the most part, but also Dutch or German— which would form the backbone of the French Fleet: French raids on Portsmouth [March 24th, 1338], on Guernsey [end of March 1338], on Arnemuiden [September 23rd, 1338], on Southampton [October 6th, 1338]. Reprisals raids on French ports and the same year, French retaliatory raids on the coast of the Kent[11]. The chain of violence...

[11] ●But in 1339. English reprisal raids on LeTréport, Boulogne.

Finally, at the beginning of 1340, *the Grand Army of the Sea* to go punish Edward III in England itself, was ready. All the crews of fishing boats of Normandy had been requisitioned.



On June 8th, the huge French fleet dropped anchor in the Zwyn [Zwin]. It was to prevent King Edward III, on his way from England, from landing on the continent, via Bruges.

Military Leaders in command ● The English fleet was commanded by the King of England Edward III Plantagenêt, a determined and intelligent leader. ●The French fleet was led by two improvised admirals: Hugues Quiéret[12] and Nicolas Béhuchet[13]; and in sub-order by vice-admiral Hélié and by captain Matthieu Quiefdeville of Dieppe. The Genoese captain Barbanera [Blackbeard] commanded the Genoese galleys whose services had been retained.

Military forces involved ●The English had 190 large ships manned by 35,000 men-at-arms and sailors[14], including 12,000 archers armed with *Welsh longbows*, the "long bow" could fire three times faster than the weapons of the 500 French

[12] Former seneschal of Beaucaire but mediocre sailor.
[13] Former tax collector.
[14] Figures from Edward III himself.

crossbowmen. More than 50 other ships of all sizes mounted by 8,000 Flemings joined the English and attacked the French from the rear. Edward III "*King of France and England*"[15] had gathered all the big ships of England and from the Cinque Ports. In total, therefore, the Anglo-Flemish aligned 240 ships of whose tonnage reached almost double over the French ships, and 43,000 men.

● The French had few royal ships but many vessels of private shipowners, a heterogeneous mass of 202 trading and fishing vessels of all sizes, framed by a few large warships taken from the English some time before: Le CHRISTOPHE-DE-LA-TOUR[16], Le SAINT-GEORGES, Le COQUE-À-BEC, Le SAINT-NICOLAS... 20,000 men formed the crews of the French fleet.

On average, the French ships carried 99 men and the English ships were larger, carrying 184 men; almost double the French number.

Strategy or tactics: Defensive for the French and offensive for the English. The tactical inexperience of the two French admirals created a no-win situation for the French caught in the trap of an estuary. The ships were embossed, and chained to each other[17] and, as a result, they were unable to maneuver and bring help to ships beset by the enemy.

The French admirals had transformed their fleet into a floating fortress very vulnerable to fire. They had to face a King of England who knew very well how to use the tidal currents, the winds, the glare of the sun and the longbow, which "cleaned" French bridges with great efficiency. The presence of some cannons on a few French and English ships is also to be noted.

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[15] ●The kings of England kept this saying and the lilies, in the first and fourth quarters of their blazon, until 1802, when the Peace of Amiens put an end to the 2nd Coalition.
[16] ●It was The CHR1STOFER taken from the Denglisch at Ainernuiden.
[17] ●This battle should be compared to the Battle of Aboukir to understand that each time the French admirals fought in a static position, the god of war tricked them into victory.

The two French admirals, contrary to what wished the competent Barbanera, refused to stow their fleet on the high seas and kept it piled up in this narrow estuary, without possibility of maneuvering. And this, despite the hostility towards the French of the populations along the Swyn.

The rivalry between the two French admirals also added to the confusion. The presence of the 12,000 Welsh "*long bow*" archers able to shoot three times faster than the 500 French crossbowmen, increased the already significant imbalance created by the numerical superiority of the 43,000 Anglo-Flemish and by the high tonnage of the English ships.

Admiral Quiéret therefore placed the French fleet in the mouth of the Zwyn. He formed three lines parallel to the coast, with their backs to the land, the crossbow troops towards the sea. The left wing towards the mouth and the right wing in front of the city of Sluys [L'Écluse]. Quiéret ordered the crews to chain the ships together. In addition, each ship dropped its anchors so as to come to a complete immobilization. On decks, large stone or planks parapets were erected to protect the combatants from the enemy's projectiles. Five large ships, not chained to their neighbors were anchored at the front of the first line in order to use their bombards (cannons).

It was the ships taken from the English and renamed: Le CHRISTOPHE-DE- LA-TOUR, L'EDOUARDE, La CATHE RINE, La ROSE and Le SAINT-GEORGES[18]. It was on the latter that the two French admirals hoisted their mark. The Barbanera's galleys provided protection on the offshore side.

Summary of the action: On June 8th, when the French fleet arrived, the first mistake was to alienate from the French the already rather hostile local Flemish populations: the Genoese captain Barbanera, a mercenary in the pay of the French, plundered the Zeeland shore and slaughtered 300 natives Flemish on the

[18] ●Everybody will recognize the ships taken from the English at the Battle of Arnemuidcn, 21 months earlier.

Dutch island of Cadzand. The French were soon to pay for this mistake.

At that time, the Zwyn estuary was a wide and deep cul-de-sac. Since 1337, the island of Cadzand had remained dismantled, and the city of Sluys was only protected with walls at the end of the same [XIV] century. Damme, on the left bank, and Bruges, at the bottom of the funnel, were hostile to the French. Large dikes, on the banks, locked the French in a mousetrap.

At noon on the 23rd, the fleet of Edward III made a stop for the night in front of the dunes of Blankenberghe. The English King had hoisted his mark on The THOMAS. There, the Dutch fishermen gave him information on the positions of the French. Edward decided to attack the next day, June 24th, the St. John' Day. But Barbanera had also seen the English fleet. He immediately went to advise Quiéret to abandon this deadly cul-de-sac, but the latter refused: "*Let shameful contempt fall on those who will leave this place!*" Quiéret simply answered when he saw that Barbanera, an experienced leader, was preparing to flee the Zwyn's trap. This did not prevent Barbanera from getting away from the battle before it was too late for his galleys.

On the morning of the 24th, with the wind blowing ashore, Edward ranged his fleet in battle and waited for the tide to rise to push it towards the coast. Thus, he was going to use with genius the *wind* and the *flow*, the rising *tide*, and the *sun glare* to launch his assault. Around 11:00 a.m., when the French had the sun in their eyes, The THOMAS gave the signal for the attack. Accompanied by his largest ships, Edward III rushed against the big French ships isolated in front of the lines: Le CHRISTOPHE-DE-LA-TOUR and Le SAINT-GEORGES.

The English shouted "Saint-George!", the Gascons[19] "*Guyenne!*" and the French "*France!*" The English archers first sent a shower of arrows at the latter and the soldiers prepared to

[19] ●Pro-English.

board. The French cannons, embarked on these two ships, fired with noise. An English galley almost immediately sank with on board many ladies of the Royal Court of England, who had wanted to witness a naval combat too closely to feel the great thrill.

When he boarded Le SAINT-GEORGES, flagship of Béhuchet and Quiéret, The THOMAS itself was riddled with cannonballs. Two English ships threw themselves on the CHRISTOPHE without the other French ships (chained to each other), could not come to its help. The terrible melee began: swords, pikes, axes, fire-breathes; everything was good. Bébuchet succeeded in fighting in single combat against Edward III and wounded him in the thigh. That was worth to him to be hanged to a yardarm as soon as he was captured by the Gascons.

The English ships that were still able to fight clashed with the isolated French ships and those of the front line. The surviving crew members of each conquered ship were immediately exterminated. After eight long hours of fierce fighting, the five unchained French ships were finally captured. Severely wounded, Quiéret had his head cut off; Béhuchet was hanged for having wounded the King[20]. Meanwhile, the lines of chained French ships had been subjected to the murderous shooting of the Welsh archers. Their decks were covered with corpses.

Night fell, barely illuminated by the glow of burning ships. The exhausted English and Gascons had broken off the fight for the night, undoubtedly determined to resume the battle the next day. Only the groans of thousands of dying French, English and Gascons disturbed the calm of the night peacefulness. Suddenly, the stealthy shadows of light boats crept up behind the French. A multitude of 8,000 Flemish were arriving from all over the neighboring regions to make the French pay for the massacre that their Genoese mercenaries had perpetrated

[20] ●The penalty of death by decapitation was reserved for ta nobles;. Béhuchet was condemned to a punishment infamous punishment [hanging! reserved usually for the people, if he had wounded the you.

days before. In the darkness, they slit the throats of the dying, the wounded, and the sleepers of the chained French third line. The battle resumed with violence. The last galleys of the mercenary 24 Genoese galleys of Barbanera took advantage of the confusion to flee definitively and thus escape the massacre.

Taking advantage of this help long awaited[21] by Edward III, the English went back into battle in order to complete the victory. It was then with the French to break the combat and to try to flee this mortal trap. Approximately 35 French ships, still seaworthy, managed to cut their moorings and break through the English lines in a terrible fighting[22].

Casualties ●The Anglo-Gascons suffered losses of 9,000 killed, including the flower of the English noblesse. ●The French lost 166 ships of any size and 15,000 men, killed, drowned, or ransomable Nobles held prisoners; the poor were systematically massacred.

Consequence of this French defeat: The Hundred Years' War had begun. Edward III managed to return to the continent. The English kept control on the Channel. Strategically, Edward did not exploit this victory. He tried to lay siege to the French city of Tournai, which he had promised to the Flemish if they would recognize him as King of France. The siege lasted two months, with great artillery reinforcements. But as the English were losing ground in Gascony and especially in Scotland where they had just lost Perth, Edouard III, discouraged, raised the siege of Tournai and accepted, on September 25, the Truce of Esplechin which was to last until June 22nd, 1341. The second Flanders' campaign of the King of England was ending, like the first, in disillusion.

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[21] ●The King of England had sent on several occasions demands of intervention to the Flemish riparians so that they take the French with reverses, but seeing their lack of cooperation, he had suspended the battle.

[22] ●They returned to France with 5,000 survivors.

Sources & Readings ●Sea Fights, from Sluys to Navarino: a popular account of the most important actions in which the British Navy has been engaged, Jewry [Valentine], Laura, London, 1868. ●Chronicles of Flanders, Hainaut and Artois at the time of the Hundred Years War (1328-1390), Jean Froissart, translation by D. Poulet, Impr. Le Limonaire, Troesnes, 1987. ●Istore et croniques de Flandres according to texts of different manuscripts, baron Kervyn de Lettenhove, F. Hayez, printer, Brussels, 1879. ●The First Valois and the Hundred Years War, Alfred Coville, Paris, J. Tallandier, 1980. ●The Preliminaries of the Hundred Years' War, Papavy, France, England, 1328-1342, Eugène Déprez, Slatkine, Geneva, 1975.

Naval Battle of La Rochelle.

Date of action: June 22nd, 1372.

Location; 14 km off the port of La Rochelle, town of Aunis, Charente-Maritime, 180 km north of Bordeaux. Geographic co-ordinates: 46° 10' north latitude and 01°09' west longitude.

Conflict: Hundred Years' War, 1337-1453. Campaign of 1372.

Background: The French had, by their land victory at Montiel[23] in March 1368, restored Henry of Transtamare to the throne of Castile. On 22nd June, the Franco-Castilian squadron fell on the English squadron which was transporting English reinforcements to Aquitaine and... pay for more than 3000 men. Windfall!

La Rochelle was besieged by the French; and in April 1372, the young[24] "Earl of Pembroke, who had been appointed Lieutenant of Aquitaine, was directed, in company with sire Guichard d'Angle, and other knights, to proceed to the relief of the beleaguered town. He sailed from Southampton on June 10th. France, cognisant of the project, dispatched the Castillan fleet of forty large ships and thirteen barges to intercept the expedition. This fleet was commanded by Ambroise Bocanegra [or Boccanera], Admiral of Castille, Cabeza de Vaca, Fernando de Peon, and Ruy Diaz de Rojas; and it awaited the very inferior English squadron off La Rochelle[25]."

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[23] ●Among the *routiers* or *brigands* who participated in this French victory, one, called Le Petit-Meschin, fought alongside du Guesclin. The captain of Grande Compagnie Périn de Sasine. *alias* Le Petit-Meschin, was of Gascon origin. He had made his first armes as a varl et of arms. Captured by the bailiff Huart de Racheval in 1368, before Orgelet [Jura], he was imprisoned, quickly escaped conspired cen t re le duc d'Anjou et, for thisreason, on May 11, 1369, Louis had him drowned in the fresh and still clear waters of the Garonne at Toulouse. His accomplices were not neglected; they were painstakingly tortured, beheaded, then discardedand, like Sasine, hurled into the Garonne.

[24] Clowes Vol. I, p.282 ff.

[25] ●Fœdera, III, 941 and Foissart, Vol. I, pp.636,637.

Military Leaders ●Franco-Spanish Squadron: Ambroise Boccanera, Grand Admiral of Castile. ●English Squadron: John Pembroke.

Military Forces involved ●English: 36 naves including 22 escorts. ●Franco-Castilian: 22 galleys, of which only 14 took part in the fight.

Strategy or tactics Two-stage combat: on the 22nd, the ships only exchanged arrows or tiles[26] of crossbows. On the 23rd, the French used a ruse: before the heavy English ships were *desilted* by the rising tide, the galleys burned 14 units; the others fell into French hands.

Summary of the Action: Fourteen galleys rushed on the English battle line whose high-board ships hid 14 ammunition transports. The Welsh and English archers rained down a hail of arrows that prevented the Franco-Spanish archbishops from raising their heads.

But the current of jusant[27] [or *ebb tide*] dragged the English ships, leaving four transports in the hands of the Franco-Spaniards, which, without any other form of trial, threw the crews into the sea. Instead of immediately pursuing his advantage, Boccanera sounded the suspension of fighting. The English thought they were withdrawing and booed them. But Boccanera confided to his crew: "They are ours. We are waiting for them tomorrow at the open sea. We will run to them from the jusant. Our light galleys will triumph over their heavy barges that cannot maneuver in low water. "

During the night, the English, who had become suspicious, sought refuge in La Rochelle. But there was not the slightest wind. As for reaching La Rochelle in small boats under the fire of the galleys, it seemed impossible. Then, during the same night from the 22nd to the 23rd, the Rochelais came to reinforce the English, bypassing the Franco-Castilian squadron.

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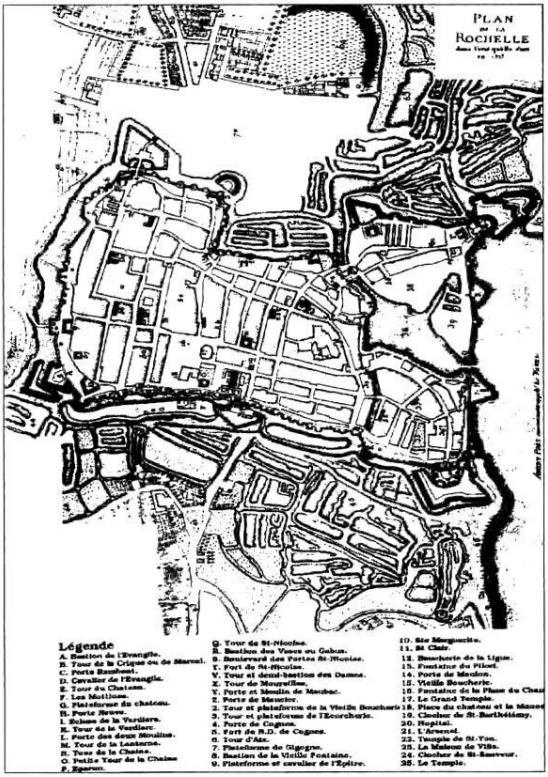
[26] ●Short and square arrows.
[27] ●From the old French *jus*, below; current caused by the ebbing tide.

At dawn, when the English ships were not yet floating[28], the galleys attacked, each pushing a small burner filled with fat and oil that a daring sailor went to attach to an English ship. The English ships burst into flames one after the other. The 800 English crewmen continued to fight desperately despite the fires, but the horses on board, panicked, smashed the hulls with their hooves.



The unscathed ship of Pembroke itself was surrounded by four galleys. Guichard d'Angle's ship was besieged by two galleys. The Franco-Spaniards showed this time an extraordinary

[28] ●The tide was still too low.

fighting spirit: " Their slightest varlet was worth a man-at-arms ", commented a chronicler[29].

Here is the account of the same battle by the English historian William Laird Clowes in his History of the Royal Navy: Pembroke sighted the enemy on June 22nd, 1372, and "with great courage he prepared for the inevitable battle, placing his archers in the bows of his ships. The [Franco]-Spaniards, who employed cannon, as well as missiles to be hurled by men from the tops, weighed and gained the wind, and then bore down with cheers on the English. The action, which was very severe, was continued until nightfall, when, Pembroke having lost only two barges, laden with stores, the forces separated.

The fight had been witnessed from the town, and sire Jehan Harpeden, commander of the place, endeavoured to induce some of the inhabitants to put to sea to assist their friends [their allies]; but [some of the inhabitants] objected that they were not sailors and that they had their own work to do on shore. Three knights only, le sire Tonnai Bouton, le sire Jacques de Surgières, and le sire Maubrun de Linières, with four barges, went out at daybreak on the 23rd to join Pembroke. The [Franco-]Spaniards who had anchored for the night, then weighed, it being high water, and, taking advantage of the wind, bore down on the English in such a manner as eventually to surround them. The usual hand-to-hand combat ensued. Pembroke's ship was grappled by four large Spaniards under Cabeza de Vaca and Fernando de Peon, and after an obstinate resistance was taken. Among the killed were le sire Aimery de Tarste, le sire John Lanton, le sire Simon Housagre [here, enumeration of 10 Rochellois and English aristocrats].

The entire English squadron was taken or destroyed; and all the prisoners of rank would have been massacred had they not undertaken to ransom their followers. One ship, carrying treasure to pay the troops in Guyenne, was sunk. Sir Jacques de Surgières was landed at La Rochelle, where he reported the

[29] ●See Grant. A varlet is the valet of a knight or man-at-arms.

disaster [and collected the ransom money]. The other prisoners were taken to Spain, where most of them were roughly treated. The catastrophe is said to have materially **hastened the loss of Guyenne**[30]."

Casualties & Losses ● "The MICHELLE of Darmouth [captain Guy de Brienne], "The GEORGE" of Dartmouth [Captain Assheder], "The GABRIELLE" [Knoll] and eleven other English ships were burned. All English ships that were not burned were captured. So, in total, the English lost **36 ships including 22 escorts**.

Consequence of this English defeat: It was a total loss of the English squadron. On July 22nd, the Franco-Castilian squadron anchored at Santander where the English prisoners were dragged, loaded with irons and "mated like hunting dogs", wrote the chronicler, rightly bitter[31].

Sources & Readings ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London.●Histoire de la Rochelle, Marcel Delafosse, Éditions Privât, Toulouse, 1985. ●La vie maritime vue à travers les actes de l'Amirauté de La Rochelle, Association Québec-France, 1998. ●La Rochelle and the Wars of Religion, Edmund Tyrrell Green, Publication David Nutt, London, 1913. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes.

[30] ●Text from Clowes Vol. I, p.282 ff. This last opinion is from Froissard, 635-639; Walsingham, 182; and Anon. History of Edward III (Hearne) . 439.
[31] ●Ibid.

Naval battle of The Sluis.

Date of action: May 12-14, 1385.

Location: Mouth of the Zwyn [Flanders], the Sluis (L'Écluse) today. Geographic average coordinates: 51° 18' North latitude and 03° 24' East longitude.

Conflict: Hundred Years War, 1337-1453. Anglo-Scottish War. French expedition to Scotland.

Context: The truce between France and England expired on May 1st, 1385. Sluis (L'Écluse) was chosen as the base from where to send a French expeditionary Corps to Scotland. The French easily transported troops and equipment from the mouth of the Seine River to Sluis.

Military leaders in command ●Admiral Jean de Vienne commanded the French Expeditionary Force bound for Scotland. ●The English fleet was under the command of Admiral Thomas Percy and Admiral John Radyngton.

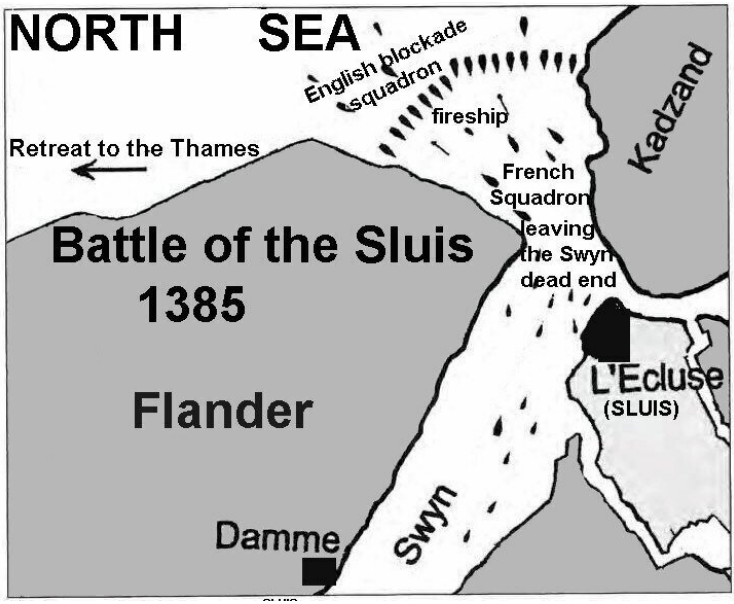
Military Forces involved ●French: 4,000 men. The French squadron had between 65 and 183 sails[32]. ●English: an equivalent number.

Strategy or Tactics: Charles VI of France had resolved to send to Scotland some troops commanded by Admiral Jean de Vienne in a *strategic diversionary operation* to help the Scottish insurrection and, at the same time, to attract the English forces in the north of the island of Great Britain while another French army would land in the south with the Connétable [Constable] of France,

Summary of the Action: The French squadron was about to leave Sluis, when strong northwest winds arose, bringing some

[32] ●According to historians, most of them were simple boats.

rain and the English fleet [May 12th] which wished to block the French squadron in the cul-de-sac of Sluis, in order to thwart its plans to invade Scotland.



Determined to get out at any cost, the French admiral Jean de Vienne reinforced his artillery with seven portable cannons. In addition, a fortuitous event favored the French: during the night, Prussian vessels (from the Hanse) deserted the English lines. After having cut their moorings, they drifted towards the French ships and handed over the English sailors who completed their crews as well as their English flags. In retaliation, the English plundered six other Hanseatic ships from Prussia which had remained loyal to them[33]. [*Sic!*]

On May 13th and 14th, the English ships closed the mouth of the Zwyn [the fjord does not exist today]. Then, Jean de Vienne decided to force the blockade by an attack in force.

[33] ●To the great satisfaction of the French who saw their enemies being destroyed.

At the head of 183 boats of all sizes —ranging from simple barques to the nave[34]— the French set out against the English blockade lines. The English sent them a fire ship without being able to stop them. The fierce battle lasted several hours. Finally, the English retreated, left the battle zone, crossed the English Channel. They anchored at the mouth of the Thames to cover the outskirts of London, thus leaving the way clear towards Scotland.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: Around May 20th, the transport and logistics of the French Expeditionary Corps was able to weigh anchor in the direction of Scotland. The entire convoy sailed away, observed from afar by English ships that did not oppose the invasion. The French landed at Dunbar and Leith[35] but had to lodge in the surrounding villages, because the Scottish capital [Edinburgh] had only 400 houses at the time. In early July, a Franco-Scottish army marched towards England under the command of Jean de Vienne.

Sources & Readings ●The History of the Wars in Scotland, from the Battle of the Grampian Hills in the Year 85 to the Battle of Culloden in the Year 1746, John Lawrie, Edinburgh, 1783. ●The naval and military history of the wars of England; including the wars of Scotland and Ireland, etc., Thomas Mante, published by the author in London, between 1794 and 1801, 6 vols. ●Jean de Vienne, Amiral de France, 1341-1396, by the Marquis Terrier de Loray, Librairie de la Société bibliographique, Paris, 1877. ●L'amiral Jean de Vienne, L. Pingaud, published in Besançon by Jacquin, 1869.

[34] ●Others say 65 sails.
[35] ●Port of Edinburgh.

Naval battle of the Raz-de-Saint-Mahé

Date of action: 12 July 1404

Location: Brittany, France.

Conflict: Hundred Years War.

Background: It was at this time that French ceased to be the official language of England. *English*[36] became the official language of England, while Wales, Scotland and parts of England continued to speak Celtic.

Military leaders in command ●*French*: Olivier de Clisson; Guillaume du Chastel; Jean de Penhoët. ●*English*: unknown.

Military Forces involved ●The British squadron consisted of 41 ships mounted by 2000 men. ●The French squadron had 30 ships and 1500 men.

Strategy or tactics: Boarding attack. Each of the two wings had deployed in two divisions. The whole quickly became a general melee.

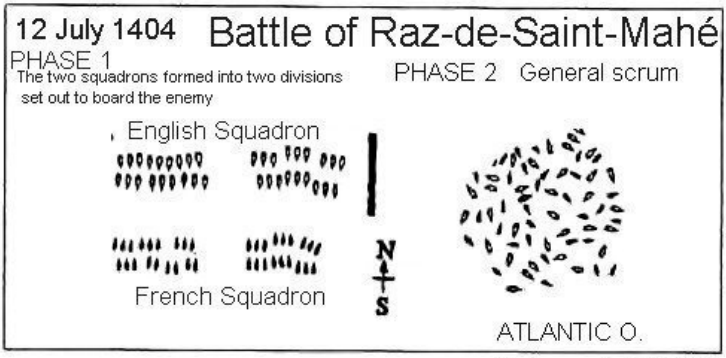
Summary of the action: At the call of Olivier de Clisson, 1200 horsemen at arms and light troops (infantry) met at Roscoff on 30 ships. They set sail on 8th July. On the evening of the 11th, boats sent in reconnaissance reported an English squadron at Raz-de-Saint-Mahé[37]: The Breton squadron rushed in search of the English. The first division, under the command of Guillaume du Chastel, and the second, under the orders of Admiral

[36] ●Amalgam of Saxon and French. Henry IV of England [1399-1413] was the first native English king of England. Nevertheless, he was perfectly bilingual. French remained the working language of English justice until the end of the eighteenth century. The King of England ceased to bear the title of *King of France and England* in the early nineteenth century [1802].

[37] ●A raz. |in Breton language) is a narrow passage crossed by strong currents.

Jean de Penhoët and his brother, went into chase. In the darkness, the English sought to evade.

On July 12th, at 3:00, the two divisions intercepted the English, who formed themselves into two divisions and faced the enemy. Until 9:00, the fight raged on boarding. Then the English closed the ranks, regrouped and concentrated their ships into a single mass. The others followed suit, and the fight continued, as fierce as before. Finally, in front of their heavy losses [500 men], some of the English threw their weapons into the sea and surrendered. But they were immediately thrown overboard by the French shouting: "*Go and get your weapons.*"



Consequence of this English defeat: The English suffered great losses: 1000 killed and drowned; 1000 prisoners, 40 large ships and a carrack were captured by the French.

Sources & Readings ●Olivier de Clisson: 1336-1407, constable of France or chief of the Breton Party? Yvonig Gicquel, J. Picollec, Paris, 1981. ●Vies des grands capitaines français du Moyen-Âge, pour servir de complément à l'histoire générale de la France aux XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles, Vol. 4: « Olivier de Clisson, connétable de France, Enguérand de Couci, maréchal de France, par Alexandre Mazas, éd. E. Devenne, Paris, 1828. ●Figures of soldiers. Olivier de Clisson, La Fayette, La

Tour d'Auvergne, le duc d'Aumale, le général Fleury, Canrobert, Bourbaki, Trochu, MacMahon, Henri Chérot, Desclée De Brouwer & Cie, Bruges, 1900. ●Olivier de Clisson and Political Society in France under Charles V and Charles VI, John Bell Henneman, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1996.

Galiote à bombe (Priv. Coll.)

Naval battle of Sluys.

Date of the action: May 22nd, 1405.

Location: City on the estuary of the river Zwyn, in the Netherlands. The Zwyn is today a thin stream of water that serves as the border between Belgium and the Netherlands. Sluys or Sluis, L'Écluse[38], Dammes and Bruges are nowadays very far from the sea. Average Geographical coordinates: 51° 18' North; North latitude and 03° 24' East longitude.

Conflict: Hundred Years War, 1337-1453. Anglo-Welsh war.

Context: France, which wanted to help the insurgent Welsh against the English occupier, was considering sending, at the request of the Welsh prince Owen Glyndowr[39], reinforcements for the French Expeditionary Corps in the Wales. These troops were concentrated at Sluis (L'Ecluse). Then, Admiral Thomas of Lancaster, son of the King of England, put himself in the way of this project.

Military Leaders in command ●The English squadron was commanded by Admiral Thomas de Lancaster.

Military Forces involved ● The English squadron consisted[40] of 42 ships, 600 men-at-arms and 1,200 archers. According to the Englishman Wylie, it had a hundred ships and 5,000 men. The English Landing Corps consisted of 3,000 men.

Strategy or tactics: Surprise attack. Destruction of merchant ships then landing of an assault corps to attack the city.

Summary of the Action: After a demonstration in front of Dunkirk and Nieuport, Lancaster moved to Sluis to attack the French. On May 22nd, he slipped into the Zwyn channel and

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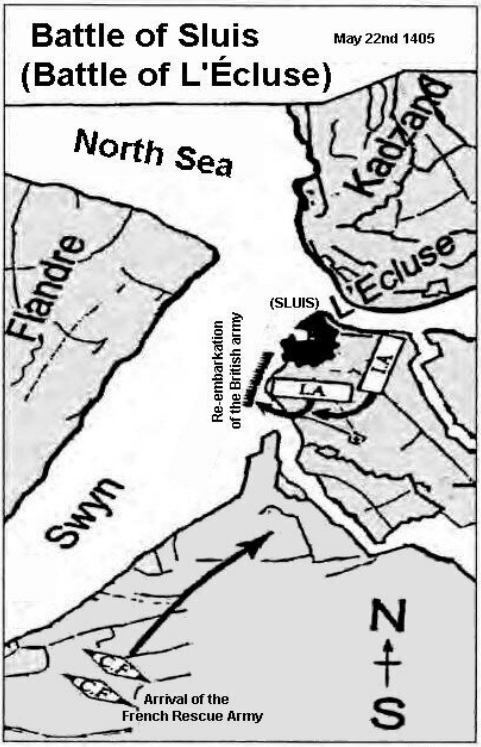
[38] ●Which means L'Écluse in Dutch.
[39] ●In accordance with the alliance agreement of 1404,
[40] ●According to La Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine française*.

destroyed French merchant ships for a value of 150 to 200,000 gold ducats.

Four ships from Hamburg, at anchor in the port, were set in flames. Lancaster then landed a column of 3,000 soldiers to attack the citadel of Sluis (L'Écluse), which was guarded by a Franco-Flemish garrison. But in spite of the renewed assaults and the attacks, the garrison resisted and gave the Duc de Bourgogne the time to assemble a relief army.

When this Relief Army did indeed appear, the English Landing Corps re-embarked, closely pursued by the French vanguard, and the English fleet swam back to the mouth of the fjord Zwyn. But at that moment three Genoese caraques appeared on them, which wanted to enter the Zwyn. Reinforced up to mid-mast by a parapet covering 200 cross-bowmen, they deliberately threw themselves on the English fleet, which was ten times more numerous. After a bloody fight, they succumbed under the number, but not without having caused the English to suffer heavy losses. So much so that the English turned around and retreated to Saint-Vaast-La Hougue.



Casualties ●Heavy but unknown.

Consequences of this combat: As a result of this attack, La Zwyn was unblocked and the citadel of Sluis was not taken. Reinforcements could be sent by the French to Wales to help and assist Owen Glyndowr.

Sources & Readings ●The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dwr [Owen Glendower], Robert Rees Davies, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1959; ●Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches: Shropshire, A.D, 1066-1300, Frederick C. Suppe, The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, [UK], 1994. ●The Talies in Tradition: a Quest for the Welsh Identity, Emyr Humphreys, Publication Seren Books, Bridgend [G.B.], 1989. ●History of Wales, Hervé Abalain, preface from Yves Le Gallo, J-P Gisserot, Paris, 1991.

Naval battle of Chef-de-Caux.

Date of the action: August 15th, 1416.

Location: Today Sainte- Adresse, Normandy, France. Geographical coordinates: 49° 30' North and 00" 05' East.

Conflict: Hundred Years War, 1337-1453.

Context: In order to supply Harfleur (English stronghold besieged by the French), an English fleet appeared at the mouth of the Seine River on the evening of August 14th. A Spanish and Genoese mercenary squadron blockaded Harfleur.

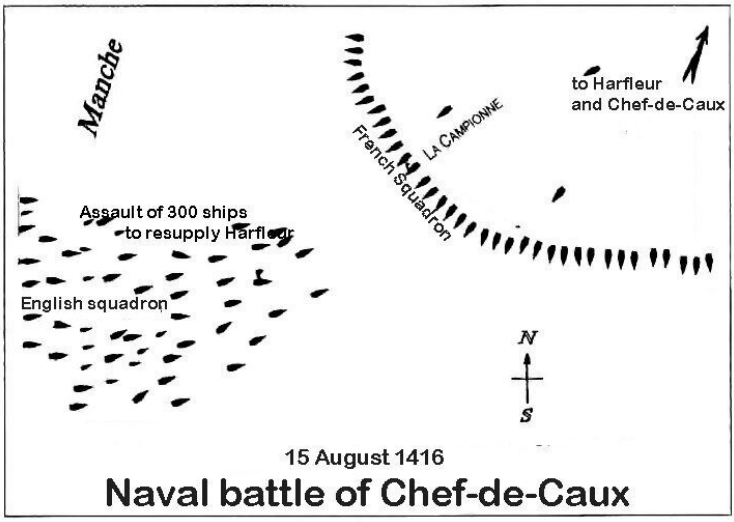
Military leaders in command ●*French*: Guillaume II de Narbonne. ●*English*: The Duke of Bedford, brother of King Henry V of England, commanded the relief expedition with Hungerford as admiral.

Military Forces involved ●*French*: 38 ships rented from the Basque-Spaniards and the Genoese were manned by mercenary crews supplemented by Frenchmen. ●*English:* 300 navires mounted by 15,000 fighters. The English garrison at Harfleur did not intervene.

Summary of the Action: The night before the battle, the Basques, who had ships that were too small and too lightly armed, decided to stall and duck without warning anyone. Others claim that the Basques only left after the first line was defeated. In fact, the Genoese carraques ensured the essential of the combat.

On the morning of the 15th, Guillaume II de Narbonnc gave the order to advance en masse. The English fleet arrived undeployed, trumpets sounding, troops in armor, sure of an easy victory. The battle took place in front of the Chef-de-Caux, around 9:00 am.

The French ships were enveloped on all sides, crushed under their numbers. Guillaume de Narbonne had deployed his mark on the caraque CAMPIONNE. The crossbowmen were shooting down the English who were climbing the masts to board. Various projectiles and bodies fell heavily on the deck of the English ships, lower than the caraques. The fight was fierce for seven whole hours. But the ammunition of the French was running out and 700 of their knights and squires were already out of action. The Flemish hourque had fallen. Guillaume de Narbonne gave the order to retreat. Three caraques remained in the hands of the English who massacred the crews as well as the French troops on board. The other survivors, in a very bad state, managed to get off and reach Honfleur.



Casualties & Losses ● The French lost 3 Genoese caraques, a Flemish hourque, 4 whaleboats captured or destroyed by the English. The human losses amounted to 1500 killed or wounded and 400 prisoners. ●The Duke of Bedford estimated his own losses at "a hundred men only". This seems implausible after

more than seven hours of hand-to-hand combat[41]. They probably only counted members of the Nobility.

As a consequence of this French defeat, Harfleur was able to be resupplied by the English, who immediately returned to Southampton. The French defense had been so vigorous that in Flanders, they believed they had succeeded. A truce was concluded on October 9th, 1416. It let the two belligerents catch their breath until February 14th, 1417.

Sources & Readings ●History of Chef-de-Caux and Sainte-Adresse, Alphonse Martin. Printed by F. Durand, Fécamp, 1881. ●Histoire de la ville d'Harfleur..., Ernest Dumont and Alfred Léger, G. Monfort, Saint-Pierre-de-Salerne, 1981. ●E.L. Potter, Henry VIII and Francis I, The Admirals' Ear, Chapter 8. Brill Academic Publishers.

[41] ●Perhaps they only counted members of the Nobility in good standing.

Naval Battle of La Rochelle.

Date of action: 30th December 1419.

Location: Maritime sector of the port of La Rochelle [France], Geographical coordinates: latitude 46° 10' N and longitude 01° 10' W.

Conflict: Hundred Years' War, 1337-1453.

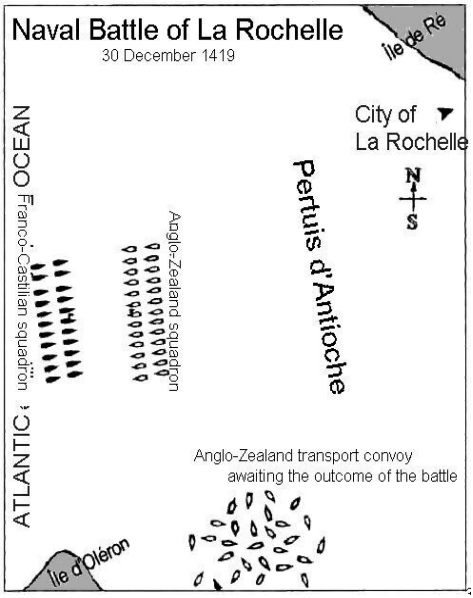
Background: Informed that a Franco-Spanish squadron would be in mid-August at Belle-Isle and sail for Scotland, King Henry V of England of Lancaster-Plantagenet established in the Irish Sea a cruise of twelve ships first, then, on August 24th, of the entire English fleet in the South. Four hundred and fifty Scots had already passed into France, by May 17th, under the command of William Douglas. The Franco-Spanish squadron[42] nevertheless managed to break through the English blockade and cross into Scotland. There, they realized that there was not enough transport ships. The 6000 men of Jehan Stuart of Buchan, Jehan Stuart of Darneley and Archibald Douglas were able to embark alone and come to land at La Rochelle, so another squadron left to fetch the rest of the Scottish Corps which was to fight on the continent.

Here is why in England, according to William Clowes, the connection between the Navy and the general mercantile prosperity of the country was so intimate: "*It is noteworthy that the revolution which, in 1460, deposed the House of Lancaster, and set up the House of York, was, to a large extent, a naval one. The attitude of the Navy was the almost inevitable result of the commercial policy which had been pursued by the Lancastrian Kings, and especially by the last of them. With the exception of a decreasing number of king's ships, all vessels used for*

[42] ●Because it included the La Rochelle flotilla of Guillaume Le Boucher and Colin Langlois.

war in those days had been built for merchantmen, served as merchantmen in peace-time, belonged to merchants, and were manned by persons nominally in the pay of merchants. The connection between the Navy and the general mercantile prosperity of the country was consequently very intimate.[43]"

Military leaders in command ●The French squadron was commanded by Robert de Braquemont and the Spanish squadron by Juan Enriquez and Alfonso Sarrias de Corvelle, Governor of the Castilian army.



Military Forces involved : ●Unknown.

Strategy or tactics: ●Collision assaults.

Summary of the action: ●On 30th December, a Franco-Castilian squadron which had captured a Zeeland convoy[44], had to support the attack of an English fleet. After a long fight – of which we have no details except that it was a general boarding and deadly hand-to-hand combat – the Franco-Castilians remained masters of almost the entire English squadron that was brought to La Rochelle. The Bastard of Alençon distinguished himself by his courage. He did not grant a quarter.

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[43] W. L. Clowes, The Royal Navy, Vol. 1, pp. 347-348.

[44] ●Zeeland is a province of the Netherlands, at the mouth of the Scheldt and Meuse rivers [1789^{km2}; capital Middelburg].

On 2nd June 1420 he received a gratuity from the King for his victory over the English.

Casualties & Losses ●*English*: Heavy. The English lost 800 men, including 700 killed, and almost their entire squadron. ● *Franco-Castilian*: losses are unknown; likely similar.

Consequence of this English defeat: La défaite arriva trop tard pour contrecarrer l'invasion anglaise.

Sources & Readings ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London. ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●La Rochelle protestante. Recherches politiques et religieuses, 1126-1792, Pierre Simon Callot, La Rochelle, 1863. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes.

Battle of Mont-Saint-Michel-au-Péril-de-la-Mer.

Also known as: Battle of Mont-Saint-Michel.

Date of action: 16th June 1425.

Location: French island of Mont-Saint-Michel-au-Péril-de-la-Mer, located at the bottom of the Gulf of Saint-Malo, 300 km west of Paris. Geographical coordinates: Latitude 48° 38' North, Longitude 01° 32' West.

Conflict: Hundred Years' War, 1337-1453 - French civil war between "Armagnacs" and "Bourguignons", 1411-1435.

Context: Normandy belonged to the King of England; only Le Mont refused to be English. The siege of Mont Saint-Michel never completely ceased during the Hundred Years' War. But in 1425, the English tried to block it by sea. This triggered the intervention of the faithful Malouins (the people of Saint-Malo), who were responsible for supplying the besieged place.

Military Leaders involved ●The French were commanded by Briant de Chateaubriand. ●The English, by Suffolk[45].

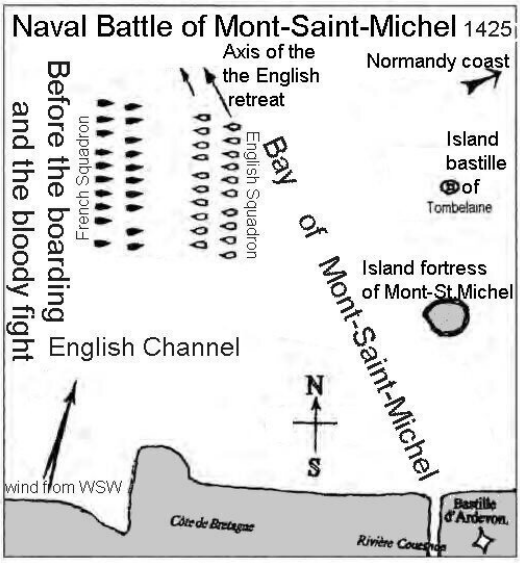
Strategy or tactics: Mass assault and hand-to-hand combat. Mont Saint-Michel, insular at high tide, was blocked by two English bastilles (wood forts): that of Tombelaine, an islet, and that of Ardevon, built on the sea shore.

Summary of the Action: A squadron of 20 ships was organised by Robert Jolivet, who was the King of England's Commissioner in Lower Normandy for the recovery of Mont Saint-Michel. With 800 men on board, the squadron arrived in the

[45] ● William de La Pole (or de la Poule or Poole for some historians), 1st Duke of Suffolk, one of the great English captains of the Hundred Years War. On 12 June 1429, he was captured during the assault on Jargeau by a French gentleman, Guillaume Renault, whom he knighted on the battlefield so as not to suffer the shame of being captured by a mere squire. He remained a prisoner of Charles VII of France for several months and paid a ransom to redeem himself before going back to England.

harbour of Regréville on 8th May. Lawrence Howden, captain of Tombelaine and captain general of the Fleet, took command. On 21 May, Suffolk was put in charge of the siege operations as Captain General of the land and sea forces. He had 100 men-at-arms and 300 archers, more than a third of whom reinforced the crews of the squadron. The rest garrisoned the bastilles of Tombelaine and Ardevon.

Worried that the siege of Mont Saint-Michel would be reinforced, the Malouins armed a flotilla of large and small ships. At their head, Briant de Chateaubriand, seigneur of Beaufort. On 16 June, the Malouins attacked the English fleet. The battle was serious. The ships were boarded and the men ferociously attacked. Finally, after a bloody battle, the French captured several English ships. The others fled, leaving the Mont unblocked on the sea side and easy to supply. However, the English retained the two bastilles that blocked[46] its land and sea access.



In fact, Tombelaine was never able to cut the logistical lines on the sea front.

Casualties & Losses ●Heavy on both sides.

[46] ●Theoretically.

As a result of this English defeat, the Malouins were able to continue supplying Mont-Saint-Michel-au-Péril-de-la-Mer until the end of the Hundred Years' War.

Sources & Readings ●Le Mont-Saint-Michel: histoire, et imaginaire Maylis Baylé, Pierre Bouet, Jean -Paul Brighelli, An thèse, Arcueil, 1998. ●Notice historique et topographique du Mont Saint-Michel, de Tombelaine et d'Avranches... Louis Blondel, Avranches, 1834. ●Les Extraordinaires croisades d'enfants et de pastoureaux au Moyen Âge. Les pèlerinages d'enfants au Mont Saint-Michel, Jean Delalande, Paris, 1961. ● Histoire du Mont Saint-Michel-au-Péril-de-la-Mer, et du Mont Tombelaine, Joseph Deschamp du Manoir, Avranches, 1869. ●Les Cent-dix-neuf Chevaliers du Mont-Saint-Michel; Leur histoire - leurs exploits, 1418-1450, Albert Descoqs, published in Mortain, 1934. ●About the insularity of Mont-Saint-Michel. Les divagations du Couesnon et ses irruptions dans les terres avant son diguement, J. Des-cottes, in Annales de Bretagne, T. 39: "Années 1930-1931", 1931. ●Histoire du Mont-Saint-Mchel et de l'ancien diocèse d'Avranches depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, etc., Jean Jacques Desroches, 2 volumes, Caen, 1838. ●Les Prisons du Mont Saint-Michel, 1425-1864, d'après des documents originaux inédits, Étienne Dupont, Paris, 1913. ●A Short Historical Account of Mont Saint-Michel and Mont Tombelène, James Hairby, Avranches, 1841. ●Chronique du Mont-Saint-Michel (1343-1468), published by S. Luce, Société des Anciens Textes Français, Paris, 1879. ● Les Défenseurs du Mont Saint-Michel 1417-1450, etc., Viscount Oscar de Poli, 1895.

Naval battle of Holy Island.

Other name: Lindisfarne.

Date of action: Early November 1462.

Location: Islet situated one kilometer off the English coast, on the border with Scotland, now connected by a causeway. Geographical coordinates: 55°68' N, 01 79' W.

Conflict: Civil War of the Two Roses in England [dynastic crisis], 1455-1485. French participation.

Background: The King of France supported the English party of Lancaster-Plantagenêt and [Tudor]; the House of York was aided by the Duke of Burgundy. The French and the English launched murderous harassment raids against the coastal towns. On the arrival in France of Marguerite d'Anjou, wife of the English King Henry VI of Lancaster, who had previously taken refuge in Scotland, Louis XI of France provided her with a squadron and reinforcements.

Military Leaders in command ●*English*: Lord Ogle and John Manners commanded the English. *French*: Pierre de Brézé.

Military Forces involved ●Unknown.

Action summary: After besieging and capturing Bamborough, Dunstanburgh and, finally, Alnwick, Brézé set sail again. But the storm arose, dispersed the French squadron, threw Queen Margaret's ship into Berwick and the others into the Bamborough area, on the small island of Lindisfarne, where the pursuing English ships of Newcastle attacked them. The fight was fierce; in the end, the English, who were much more numerous, had the upper hand.

Casualties & Losses ●The Count of Eu's caravel and three large French ships fell to the English squadron. The battle cost the Franco-Scottish 500 killed and the English an unknown number.

Consequence of this French defeat: Pierre de Brézé, then 52 years old, sailed to Berwick and returned to rescue his son Jacques, who was besieged in Alnwick by Lord Scales and the Earl of Kent. His 10,000 Scots repulsed the English besiegers, but only brought the French garrison back to Scotland in January 1463. Queen Marguerite d'Anjou's expedition was over.

Sources & Readings ●The Military Campaigns of the Wars of the Roses, Philip A. Haigh, A. Publications. Sutton, Stroud [G. B.], 1995. ●The Wars of the Roses, Military Activity and English Society, 1452-1497, Anthony Goodman, Routledge, London and New York, 1990. ●Lancaster and York: the Wars of the Roses, Alison Weir, J. Cape Publishing, 1995. ● The Medieval Soldier in the Wars of the Roses, Andrew W. Boardman, Sutton, Phoenix Mill, 1998.

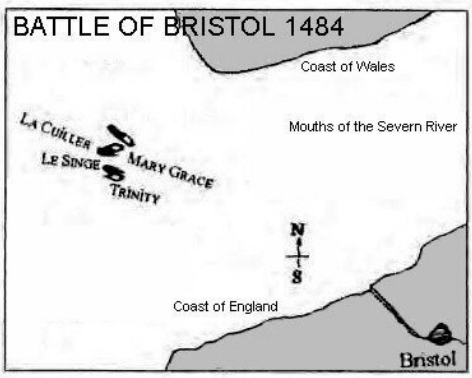
Naval Battle of Bristol.

Date of the Action: 1484.

Location: City located in England in the Mouths of the Severn. The battle took place in the. Bristol Channel. Approximate co-ordinates of the battle: 51º30' North latitude and 00º 50' West longitude.

Conflict: Civil War of the Roses in England, 1455-1485.

Context: During the 30 years of this English civil war, the Yorks and the Lancasters took turns ruling, depending on the fortune of the arms. The King of France supported the English Lancastrian [Tudor] party. Taking advantage of the war, some privateers were engaged in jolly racing.



Military Leaders in command; ●Jean Coëtanlem, French privateer.

Strategy or tactics: Combat by boarding.

Summary of the Action: Believing his investment to be profitable, a French pirate, Jean Coëtanlem, had sold his possessions to go privateering. Aboard his ships named "La CUILLER" and "Le SINGE", he scoured the sea in search of the English. The people of Bristol, England, armed three large ships well equipped with artillery, doubled the crews and made a special quest with the aim of celebrating a novena of masses so that the Almighty God would help them find Jean Coëtanlem. He granted their request the next day. La CUILLER, Le SINGE and a third French ship were joined in the vicinity of Bristol, a league and a half (6 km)

from the coast of Great Britain. They were the TRINITY, the MARY-GRACE[47] and a third ship. A fierce battle ensued which lasted a good five or six hours. Finally, the English asked for a respite of two hours, The truce ended, Coëtanlem rushed to board the MARY-GRACE, seized it and then captured the whole squadron.

Casualties & Losses ●French: unknown. ●English: all three ships.

Consequence of this English defeat: On his return to Le Plomb [Pointe-du-Plomb], near La Rochelle, Coëtanlem saw himself seized by the French Administration with most of his booty and his captures. Discouraged, he put himself at the service of Portugal[48].

Sources & Readings ●Les Koacanlem, marchands, pirates et patriotes bretons, 1455-1519, Roparz Robert Om-nès, Éditions Sked, Pont-L'Abbé, 2000. ●The Chronicles of the War of the Roses, Elizabeth Hallarn, Weidenfeld and Nicholson Editions, 1 988. ● The Wars of the Roses; Peace and Conflict in 15th Century England, John Gillingham, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1981. ●The War of the Roses, Hubert Cole, Hart-Davis MacGibbon, London, 1973. ●Histoire maritime de France contenant L'Histoire des Provinces et villes maritimes des combats de mer, depuis la fondation de Marseille, 600 ans avant J.-C., de la Flibuste, des Navigations, Voyages autour du monde, Naufrages célèbres, découvertes, Colonisations, de la Marine en général, avant, pendant et depuis le règne de Louis XIV jusqu'à l'année 1850, par Léon Guérin, Dufour et Mulat éditeurs, Paris, 1851.

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[47] ●The TRINITY was 500 tons and the MARY GRACE 300.

[48] ●Nearly two centuries later, the French Administration also discouraged (among many others) Radisson and Des Groseillers in the exploitation of the Hudson's Bay furs, so much so that these two explorers went into the service of England and founded the Hudson's Bay Company which precipitated the loss of a vast territory by New France. The small Parisian civil servants with discretionary powers have always been the drag on the French economy.

Naval battle of Brest.

Date of action: August 9th, 1512.

Location; Finistère, Brittany, France. Geographical coordinates: 48° 24' North latitude and 04° 29' West longitude.

Conflict: Watch of the Holy League. King Henry VIII of England joined on November 13th, 1511.

Context: Pope Julius II had united a coalition against Louis XII of France: the Emperor of Germany, Spain, England, Venetia [Venice], Switzerland, Tuscany [Florence] and Liguria [Genoa]. The French squadron, unconcerned with papal excommunication and canon law, concentrated at Brest, to intercept the English raids.

Military leaders in command ●*French*: vice-admiral René de Clermont; Hervé de Portzmoguer [or Primauguet]. ●*English*: Admiral Howard.

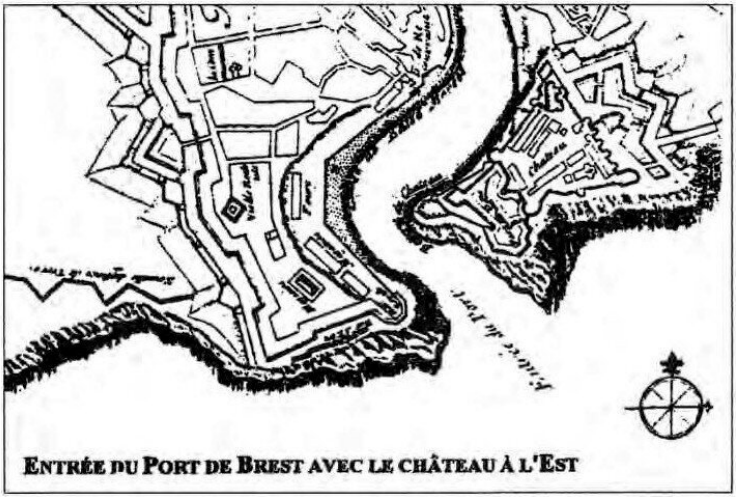
Military Forces involved ●*English*: 51 warships of great tonnage and 26 Flemish hoarders intended to serve as fire ships. ●*French*: 21 warships.

Strategy or Tactics: Attack in pack, with cannon, by several English ships, against two French, under the eyes of the French admiral who did not intervene[49].

Summary of the Action: During the night of August 9 to 10, 1512, an English fleet, with papal support, was announced. Hervé de Portxmoguer, captain of La CORDELIÈRE, had guests on board. He weighed anchor without taking the time to disembark his guests and rushed on the English in order not to

[49] ●The causes of this non-intervention could never be determined. Was it for religious reasons or out of cowardice? Opposing the will of the pope could lead to the excommunication of the offender, who was later deposed, but soon returned to grace; this leaves a doubt.

be locked up in the roadstead of Brest. The English Admiral Howard had seen the 21 French warships anchored outside the passes of the Brest Narrows between the Pointe de Saint-Mathieu and the Pointe de Toulinguet, three miles off shore, around 11:00 am. The English fleet consisted of 51 large warships and 26 Flemish hoarders.



Judging the game to be too unequal (or perhaps also for religious reasons) the French captains turned back to the Brest Narrows, and took no part in the action. The first rank ships, La LOUISE, flying flag of Vice Admiral René de Clermont, and La CORDELIÈRE [Captain Hervé de Portzmoguer or Primauguet] covered the retreat with a small vessel, "La NEF-DE-DIEPPE". These three ships bravely faced the enemy.

The English were only two leagues away; the sea was rough and the wind upright. Two English ships broke away and, forcing the sails, took an advance of a quarter of a league. One of them threw itself on La LOUISE and, damaging her with a

hail of cannonballs, broke her mainmast. It was the English admiral Howard on board the MARY-ROSE[50]

Although La LOUISE was larger[51], the French admiral ordered[52] his ship to retreat. He watched from afar as the last two French ships were demolished by a swarm of English and Flemish ships. The MARY-JAMES [Captain Thomas Ughtred, only 400 tons] attacked and circled around the slower La CORDELIÈRE, like a wasp around an auroch, and at each passage, filled her sides with cannonballs almost at the waterline.

Meanwhile, the bulk of the English fleet arrived, and in particular the enormous REGENT and SOVEREIGN[53]. The SOVEREIGN [Ch. Brandon] immediately let himself be carried on La CORDELIÈRE to attack her, but far from being intimidated, with a deadly broadside, the latter smashed a mast and forced him to leave the battlefield to recover.

The REGENT [1,000 tons, Thomas Knyvet], which was about to attack the NEF-DE-DIEPPE, saw the SOVEREIGN retreating and came to the rescue. The CORDELIÈRE, although much smaller, threw herself on the English ship to keep her downwind and began firing at her[54] while on the second and third floors of the aft castle and on the forward floor, a cloud of weapons spat out their shots and projectiles in all directions. La CORDELIÈRE had only 50 gunners and 100 harquebusiers to hold off the 100 gunners and 400 soldiers of the REGENT as well as the batteries of the MARY JAMES and a third English ship escorting The REGENT[55].

Hervé de Primauguet, captain of La CORDELIÈRE, made sure that all his guns were firing at maximum. Thomas Knyvet, of the REGENT, was killed; his ship had a broken mast. A third

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[50] ●500 tonneaux ; 400 hommes d'équipage.
[51] ●790 tons; 600 crewmen,
[52] ●"Cowardly" commented the French chronicles.
[53] ●Of 1,000 tons each.
[54] With 16 large-caliber pieces that sent stones weighing from 100 to 120 pounds.
[55] His "matelot".

of the English crew was out of action[56]. On board La CORDELIÈRE, only the gunners and the 100 arquebusiers were engaged. In steerage, the company of soldiers (800 soldiers and 300 gentlemen) awaited the order to act. The old CORDELIÈRE was leaking on all sides. Primauguer then ordered the boarding and soon the grappling hooks united the two ships in an embrace of death. Blood flowed; the dead covered the decks. After two and a half hours of fierce fighting, the scales began to tip in favor of the English.

In the distance, on the Brest side, the French squadron was watching the massacre as well as the rest of the English fleet that was not engaged. Then, a French soldier voluntarily set fire to the powder. In the terrible deflagration that followed, Le REGENT and La CORDELIÈRE vanished.

Casualties & Losses ●Of the 1250 Frenchmen aboard La CORDELIÈRE [including 1100 unused soldiers, 50 gunners, and 100 sailors], only about 20 survived. ●Of the REGENT, about 60 survived out of the 300 crewmen and 400 soldiers. Three English gunners [out of 100] survived.

Consequence of this French defeat, the two ships disappeared. The French vice-admiral René de Clermont was dismissed for cowardice, but he was soon back in grace [57]. He was again vice-admiral at the advent of François 1er.

But this Pyrrhic victory did not bring Admiral Howard anything. The English fleet remained inactive before Brest for three days. Then, on the 13th, in order not to leave empty-handed, Admiral Howard disembarked a troop that burned 27 different ships and took 5 others with 800 civilian prisoners, then hurriedly reembarked before the French troops could intervene.

Sources & Readings ●*Histoire maritime de France contenant L'Histoire des Provinces et villes maritimes des combats de*

[56] ●30 kiled and 60 wounded.
[57] ●By protection from his family.

mer, depuis la fondation de Marseille, 600 ans avant J.-C., de la Flibuste, des Navigations, Voyages autour du monde, Naufrages célèbres, découvertes, Colonisations, de la Marine en général, avant, pendant et depuis le règne de Louis XIV jusqu'à l'année 1850, par Léon Guérin, Dufour et Mulat éditeurs, Paris, 1851. p.181 ff. ●History of Anne de Bretagne, J.-J.-E, Roy, A.. Marne et Fils, Tours, 1874. ● History of the league made in Cambray, between Jules II, pope; Maximitien Ist, Emperor; Louis XII, King of France; Ferdinand V, King of Arragon, and all the princes of Italy, center the Republic of Venice, the abbot Dubos, Editions A. MoeLJens, The Hague, 1710, 2 vols. ●History of Louis XII..., L. Todière, Marne, Tours, 1856. ●The Very Holy League, Pope Julius Il and Louis XII, end of the reign (151 1-1515), excerpts from the Correspondence of Louis XII, the Loyal Servant, Fleurange the adventurous,.., by B. Zeiler, Hachette, Paris, 1S89. ●Anne de Bretagne, wife of Charles VIII and Louis XII, 1476-1514, Auguste Bailly, Les Livres merveilleux, Monaco, 1943. ●Hervé de Portzmoguer, unpublished documents, by M. Arthur de La Borderie, Imprimerie A. Jaouen, Quimper, 1885.

Execution of British Admiral Byng following the French victory of Velez-Malaga. This execution strongly traumatized the English admirals who became inclined to look for guilt in their underlings. The mood of the wing commanders was as disturbed as it had been in the French Navy during the French Revolution and after the Toulon Affair when aristocratic officers treacherously handed over their warships to the English). From then on, *Political Commissars* kept an eye on French admirals and ship captains, ready to have them guillotined if they thought they detected the slightest weakness.

Naval battle of Baie des Blancs-Sablons.

Other name: *Naval Battle of the Croyx Primoguet*.

Date of action: April 22nd, 1513.

Location: The *Bay of Blancs-Sablons* is located in Finistère, Brittany, France[58]. Geographical coordinates: 49º 22' North latitude and 4º 46' longitude West.

Conflict: War of the Holy League, which had begun on October 4th, 1511. King Henry VIII of England had acceded to it on 13th November 1511.

Background: Seven countries had banded together against France under the aegis of Pope Julius II[59]. Soon, the separate events of 23rd March and 1st April, 1513 rid it of two powerful adversaries: Venice and Spain. The English fleet had been embossed since April 11th, 1513 in front of Pointe Saint-Mathieu, blocking the road to Brest. A French squadron [Prégent de Bidoux] wanted to break the blockade.

Military Leaders in command ●French: *admiral of the Levant* Prégent de Bidoux. ●English: Admiral Edgar Howard.

Military Forces involved ●French: six galleys and four brigantines[60] ●English: about fifty ships of all sizes.

Strategy or tactics: The English attempt to *envelop the French* was unsuccessful.

Summary of the action: Wanting to break the blockade, the French squadron of Prégent de Bidoux[61] was spotted by six

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[58] ●It is not, of course, the Canadian *Blanc-Sablon*.

[59] ●Giuliano Della Rovere, born in Albissola (1443-1,513), was Pope from 1503 to 1513. This helmeted pope "' restored the political power of the papacy in Italy and was the soul of the League of Cambrai against the Wenetians [1508] and the Holy League against the France [1511-1512].

[60] ●Small two-masted, single-deck vessel.

[61] ●Six galleys and four brigantines.

ships which sounded the alarm. Bidoux was, on April 22nd, 1513, at the Croyx Primoguet, in the Bay of Blancs-Sablons. About fifty English ships soon appeared and began to envelop the ten French ships. But by an aggressive maneuver, Bidoux got on them, fought with rage and broke through the blockade line. After sinking an English ship and two troop transports, and damaging Stephcn Bull's The LESSE BARKE, the French entered Brest. Bidoux lost only a small brigantin.

Casualties & Losses ●French: a brigantine. ●English: one ship and two troop transports sunk. The LESSE BARKE damaged.

Consequence of this battle: The two squadrons claimed victory, the French for having succeeded in breaking through the English line by inflicting losses on the English and the English for... have remained on the battlefield.

Sources & Readings ●The History of the Life, Victorious Reign, and Death of King Henry VIII. Containing an account of his wars and victories [...] To which is added a compendium, of the life and reign of that glorious and pious prince King Edward the Sixth, H. Rodes, London. ● Tourville, by Dantel Dessert, Pâlis, Fayard, 2002. ●Béveziers (1690), la France prend la maîtrise de la Manche, by Jean Meyer, Paris, Economica, 1393. ●Tourville and Béveziers, E. Taillemite, Pierre Guillaume, Paris, Economica, 1991.

Naval battle of Brest.

Date of the action: April 24th, 1513.

Location: Finistère, Brittany, France. Geographic coordinates: 48°24' North latitude and 04°29' West longitude.

Conflict: War of the Holy League[62]. King Henry VIII of England joined on November 13th, 1511.

Context: France had to face a coalition fomented by Pope Julius II. The latter had united seven countries against Louis XII of France. The treaties of March 23rd and April 1st, 1513, rid France of two powerful adversaries: Venice and Spain. In 1513, England, which was trying to thwart the union of Brittany with France, attempted to destroy a French squadron under the walls of Brest.

Military Leaders in Command ●*English*: Admiral Edgar Howard. ●*French*: vice-admiral Guyon, Le Roi, sieur du Chillou.

Military Forces involved ●The English squadron included: 24 warships and 6480 men; each ship was flanked by a supply transport armed for combat, ●The French squadron of Chillou: 15 ships including galleys, not to mention 24 hourques intended to serve as fire ships.

Strategy or tactics: The French line was fixed, each naval unit solidly immobilized (embossed) by several anchors and flanked by some batteries hastily installed on the rocks. If the ebb tide allowed it, fire ships were to be launched against the English.

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[62] ●In fact, the name Holy League was given to four armed Catholic associations. The first two, from 1435 to 1456 and from 1508 to 1514, were aimed at ousting the French from Italy; the third, from 1576 to 1553, was directed against the Calvinists in France; the fourth and last, from 1569 to 1571 and from 1664 to 1699, were united against the Turks. The first two were not well defined in time. There were also frequent resurgences; for example, in 1521.

More numerous, the English tried to board the ship, but were pushed back by the crossfire.

Summary of the Action: Having decided to attack the French squadron under the walls of Brest, the English line advanced in order of battle in the Narrows, but the ship of the Anglo-Angevin prince Arthur Plantagenet ran aground on a reef and Howard gave the order to withdraw to Bertheaulme Bay. Du Chillou took advantage of the situation to fortify himself under the castle of Brest by placing a line of 24 hourques which, in the event of an English assault, were to drift with the ebb current onto the English fleet and set it on fire.

On April 24th, Admiral Howard launched his attack while large English vessels returned to anchor 6 km away, in front of Pointe Saint-Mathieu, in order to prevent any attempt to sottie Du Chillou's squadron.

Admiral Howard placed himself at the head of the lighter ships with the large ships, The ROSE, The HENRY, The SOVERE1GN, The GREAT BARK, The CRYST, The SANCHO-DE-GARRA, The CHRISTOPHER DAVY, The PETER POMECARNET and The SWEEPSTAKE. The whole line advanced on the French galleys. While the An-English were making their battle dispositions, Prégent de Bi-doux had erected on the most advanced rocks of the coast some batteries of four guns. When The ROSE, which led the English line, had sufficiently ap-proached, it was caught in the crossfire of the galleys and the land batteries. Despite this, Admiral Howard managed to jump with 17 men onto Prégent's railing; suddenly his mooring line came undone and The ROSE moved away from the French ship. The Englishmen who remained isolated with the French were massacred after a desperate fight. The HENRY tried to free the admiral, but had to retreat after suffering losses of 45 killed. Other English ships desperately charged the French galleys to break their oars and approached within boarding distance, but their futile attempts were paid for heavily in lives.

Finally, after a deadly battle, the English retreated, and joined the other units of their fleet in front of Pointe Saint-Mathieu. Soon they disappeared beyond the horizon.

Casualties & Losses ● Quite heavy on both sides.

Consequence of this English defeat: The next day, April 26, three English vessels bearing the white-crossed flag of the Parliamentarians came to inquire about the fate of Admiral Edgar Ho-ward. They looked for his body. He was fished out two days later by the French, embalmed and sent to his family in England. Admiral Thomas Howard, brother of the victim, succeeded him at the head of the English fleet.

Sources & Readings ● History of Anne de Bretagne, J.-J.-E. Roy, A. Marne et Fils, Tours, 1874. ● History of the league made at Cambray, between Julius II pope; Maximilian I, emperor; Louis XII, king of France; Ferdinand V, King of Aragon, and all the princes of Italy, against the Republic of Venise, the abbot Dubos, Editions A. Moetjens, The Hague, 1710, 2 vols. ● Histoire de Louis XII..., L Todière, Marne, Tours, 1 856. ●!" Most Holy League, Pope Julius II and Louis XII, Jin of the reign (1511-1515), excerpts from the Correspondence of Louis XII, the Loyal Servant, Fleurange the adventurous..., by B. Zeller, Hacliette, Paris, 1889. +● Anne of Brittany, wife of Charles VIII and Louis XII, 1476-1514, Auguste Bailly, Les Livres merveilleux, Monaco, 1943.

Naval Battle of Oxfordness.

Date of action: 6 July 1543.
Location: Peninsula located in the south-east of England. ***Conflict***: War between France and the Empire of Charles V. War of Scottish Independence.
Background: On November 24th, 1521, Henry VIII of England and the Emperor Charles V signed a secret coalition treaty against France. On May 29th, 1522, therefore, Henry VIII of England declared war on France because, on the one hand, Henry wished to reconquer Normandy and Guyenne[63], and, on the other hand, he intended to chastise Francis 1st of France who was helping Scotland in its war of Independence (against England). The *Treaty of Rouen* of 26th August, 1517, between France and Scotland, obliged France to provide soldiers to Scotland. The convoys between these two countries were therefore the object of repeated attacks by the English squadrons. In 1542, Mary Stuart had become Queen of Scots by the death of her father, James V. But until 1560 –so for 18 years– it was his mother, Mary of Guise, who was regent of Scotland.

Vice-Admiral "Sir William Fitz-William was at once sent to squadron with a fleet of twenty-eight sail to protect English commerce and annoy French trade, which he eventually did. Another squadron of seven ships went to the Firth of Forth, and, as a precautionary measure, burnt Scots vessels that were there. A little later, on June 8th, a great compliment was paid to England and to her Lord High Admiral, by Surrey's appointment as commander-in-chief of the combined fleet of England and of the Holy Roman Germanic Empire. The Emperor's patent to Surrey, signed in London, after reciting that Henry had fitted out a fleet "under the command of the most illustrious Thomas, Earl of Surrey, our most dear cousin, Knight of the most noble

[63] ●The English were long haunted by the recurring regret of having lost the Hundred Years War and above all, their provinces of Normandy and Guyenne.

Order of the Garter, Lord High Admiral of England, Wales, Ireland, Normandy, Gascony, and Aquitaine[64]". One can already sense in this accumulative enumeration the imperial pleasure of a Monarchy that would end up four centuries later with an immense Empire of 30,000,000^{km2}, second only to the abominable Mongol Empire.

Military Forces involved ●The *French* transport squadron consisted of 16 ships including eight escort vessels. ●The *English* squadron consisted of six large warships. It was reinforced in April 1543 by the eleven cruisers of the Flemish Vice-Admiral Van Meckeren.

Strategy or tactics: Melee with cannonade and boarding.

Summary of Action: In this year 1543, the French squadron of 16 sails had brought to Aberdeen some reinforcement of troops and urgent dispatches to the *Dowager Queen*[65]: But on the return, on July 6th, at the height of Oxfordness, a squadron of six large English warships tried to intercept the convoy. The eight French escort ships, grouped around the ship Le SACRE, broke away to block the way to the English squadron while the rest of the convoy continued on its way. A French ship of 120 men was attacked by The LESSER GALLEY. As for Le SACRE, it victoriously supported the most violent fight. Twice attacked on boarding by The PRIMROSE and The MINION, and although her captain was wounded, Le SACRE not only managed to free itself from the embrace of English captains Rice Mancell and Baldwin Willoughby after inflicting heavy losses on them, but it even managed to take one of their ships.

Casualties & Losses ●The English lost one ship, the French none.

Consequence of this English defeat: The French convoy succeeds in forcing the passage. With their capture, Le SACRE and the French escort ships returned to France.

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[64] ●W. L. Clowes, Vol. I. pp. p458 ff.

[65] ●"Dowager" comes from dowry. The dower was the set of territorial property so had inherited the queen on the death of her husband.

Sources & Readings ●Renaissance Monarchy. The Reign of Henry Vlll, Francis 1st and Charles V, Glenn Richardson, Publications Arnold, London, 2002. ●François Ier and Henri VIII; deux princes de la Renaissance (1515-1547), Charles Giry-Deloison, Éditeur, Institut français du Royaume-Uni, Centre d'histoire de la région du Nord et de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest, London, 1995. ●The Sisters of Henry III, Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scotland (November 1489 - October 1541), Mary Tudor, Queen of France and Duchess of Suffolk (March 1496 — June 1533), by Hester Wolferstan Chapman, Cape Publishings, London, 1969. ●Thorns and Thistles. Diplomacy between Henry III and James V, 1528-1542, C. Patrick Hotle, Lanham [MD], University Press of America, 1996.

Naval battle of Cherbourg.

Date of the action: July 22nd, 1543.

Location: Cotentin Peninsula, France. Geographical coordinates: 49° 39' North latitude and 01° 39' West longitude.

Conflict: War between France and the Empire of Charle V[66]. War of Independence of Scotland.

Context: Convoys between France and Scotland were the object of attacks by English squadrons. An English squadron was ordered to attack Cherbourg and raze the city in retaliation for the English defeat of Oxfordness on July 6, 1543.

Military Forces involved ●Unknown.

Strategy or Tactics: The battle took place with cannon exclusively, the ships serving as floating batteries.

Summary of the Action: When the English squadron appeared, two French warships, which were there, attacked the much larger English squadron. In the face of the aggression, the English held their ground, but one of the French captains was killed and his ship began to show signs of hesitation. At that moment, two ships from Barfleur, one commanded by Sieur du Tourp and the other by gentlemen from the *Val de Saire*, came to their aid. With cannons, the Barfleurese sank The GRAND-MARTIN from London. Then, the other ships of the English squadron stalled, leaving 80 prisoners in the hands of the French, including a Lord and the pilot of the expedition, a Frenchman who was immediately put to death for high treason.

Casualties & Losses ● The English lost a ship and its 80 surviving crew members.

[66] ●Charles Quint, Emperor of the Holy Roman Germanic Empire.

Consequence of this English defeat: The attack on Cherbourg had been aborted.

Sources & Readings ●La délivrance de Cherbourg et du Clos du Cotentin à la fin de la guerre de Cent Ans, André Plaisse, La Presse de la Manche, Cherbourg, 1889. ●History of Cherbourg, according to the wedding collected by E. Avoine, Cherbourg, Impr. of A. Périgault, 1927. ●La rade et le port militaire de Cherbourg, Documents tirés des archives du château d'Harcourt, C. Hippeau, Caen, Impr. de Goussiaume de Lapone, 1864. ●Cherbourg during the Hundred Years' War, from 1354 to 1450, Madeleine de Masson d'Autume, Cherbourg, Société nationale académique, 1948.

Battle in the North Sea.

Date of action: 9 August 1543.

Location: The exact coordinates are unknown.

Conflict: War between France and the Empire of Charles V. French participation in the Scottish War of Independence.

Background: Francis I[st] of France was at war with the Emperor Charles V and England. This meant that shipping between France and Scotland was repeatedly attacked by English squadrons. In 1542, Mary Stuart[67] had become Queen of Scots following the death of her father, James.

Military Forces involved ●A French squadron of eight sails.

Strategy or tactics: The escort played its part and blocked the attack as the convoy passed, but lost three small fighting ships.

Summary of the Action: The eight French ships escorting a convoy of transports came upon the English fleet. In the ensuing battle somewhere in the North Sea, Le FRANÇOIS, Le JACQUES and Le MARTIN[68] sacrificed themselves to block the passage of the English as the convoy passed.

Casualties & Losses ● The *French* lost three ships with their crew of 100 men. ●*English* losses are unknown.

Consequence of this British failure: Thanks to the sacrifice of the escort, the French convoy passed and the reinforcements could reach Scotland.

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[67] ●The name of the Scottish family Stuart, also spelled Steaart, Stewart, Steward, was none other than the title of the butler's fane (Lord steward) exercised hereditarily by its members. The patronymic name was FirzAlan [from the Franco-Norman Son of Alain]. The last of the Stuart dynasty was Henry, Benoît, Clément Stuart, Cardinal of York, born in Rome, died in Frascati (1725-1807), younger brother of Charles Edward.

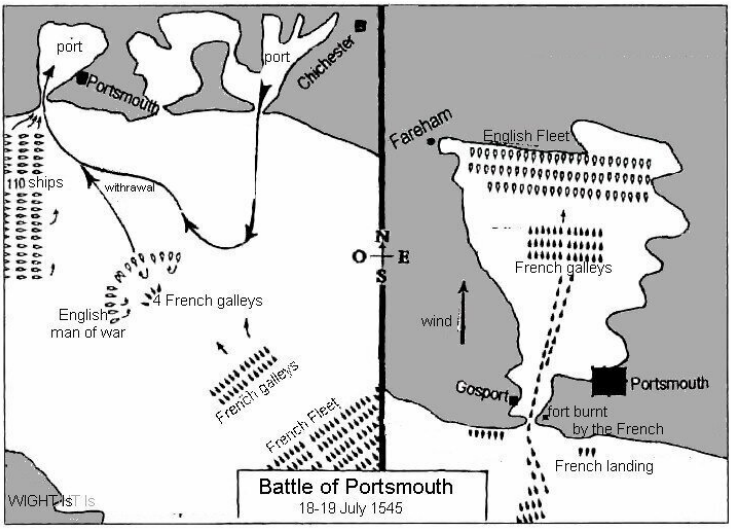
[68] ●100 men each.

Sources & Readings ●Mary Queen of Scots: a Study in Failure, Jenny Wormald, Publication G, Philip, London, 1988. ●La Reine maudite: le dossier Marie Stuart, Jean-Claude Pascal, Éditions Le Rocher, Monaco, 1988. ●Marie Stuart, Queen of France and Scotland or Ambition betrayed, René Guerdan, Pygmalion, Paris, 1986. ●Rivality of Francis Ist and Charles V, François Auguste Marie Mignet, 2 volumes, Paris, 1875. ●Les dessous de l'histoire: curiosités judiciaires, administratives, politiques et littéraires, T.1, by J. Hovyn de Tranchère, E. Leroux, Paris, 1886. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London.

Naval Battle of Portsmouth.

Date of action: 18 July 1545.

Location: English war port located in the south of England. Geographic coordinates: latitude 50° 48' N and longitude 01° 05' W.

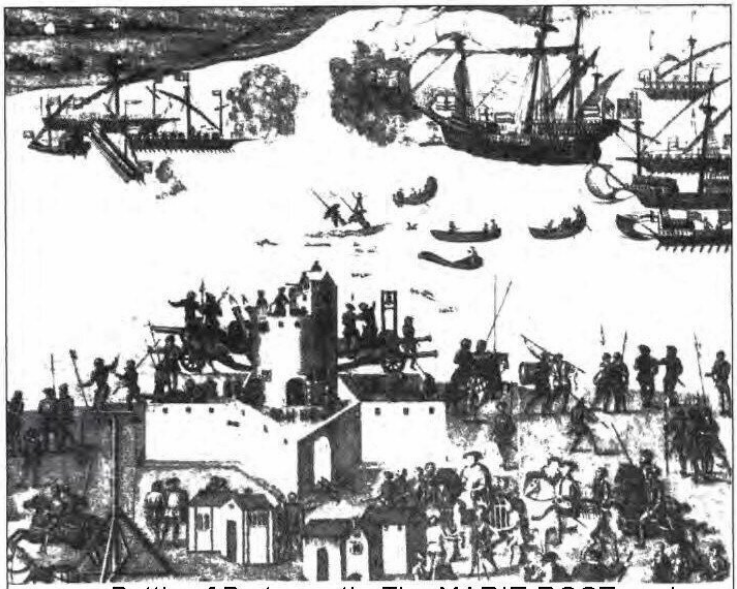


Conflict: The war between France and the Empire of Charles V was temporarily stopped. French participation in the war of Scottish independence in the face of the annexationist ambitions of England.

Background: In 1545, Francis 1st had made the plan to seize the Isle of Wight in the southern sector of Portsmouth.

Military leaders in Command ●The English fleet was commanded by Admiral Sir John Dudley, Baron de Lisle, Admiral of England since 1543. Vice-Admiral Sir George Carew and

Captain Roger Grenville commanded the MARIE-ROSE, the most modernized unit of this English fleet. In fact, this 700-tonne vessel was 35 years old, but he had been dangerously overloaded with heavy artillery. ●The French fleet was under the command of Admiral Claude d'Annebault, Baron de Retz.



Battle of Portsmouth: The MARIE-ROSE sank before the eyes of the King of England

Military Forces involved ●British fleet: 150 warships. ●French fleet: 140 vessels[69].

Strategy or Tactics: The English fleet was besieged by the French squadron, but did not accept a general battle. It was Henry VIII himself who had the idea, borrowed from the Mediterranean navies, to mount heavy artillery on the lower decks of The MARIE-ROSE, jewel of England[70]. This ship, whose

[69] ●Galleys and troop transports.

[70] ●Named" after Mary Tudor, the King's sister, whose family symbol was the rose.

fate was so fatal, was a landmark in the English Navy. Nine years earlier, The MARIE-ROSE had been renovated and its armament increased and modernized. Large bronze cannons had been added. In addition, not counting its crew of 415 sailors, the ship carried 285 heavily armed soldiers covered in armor[71].

All this weight, which had not been foreseen when the ship was designed, was the cause of the capsizing. As the ship veered abruptly in order to use the other battery, a wind, however modest, tilted the ship to such an extent that the ports of the lower battery came dangerously close to sea level and then was swallowed up under water.

The water immediately invaded the hull and the ship sank in a few tragic minutes. Unfortunately, a defensive and tactical detail had been added to the defenses which would cause the loss of many victims on the English side: an *anti-boarding net.* This mesh, intended to contain the assaults of the French, bordered the railings on a height of 2.5^{m} to 3^{m}. It became a death trap for the English, caught as in a mousetrap. When, in the midst of a panic, the English sailors were forced to leave the capsizing ship, all of 700 men on board, except 30, were drowned. The only ones who survived were those in the rigging as well as the lookout perched in the crow's nests.

Underwater research carried out in 1970 revealed[72] that the newly embarked large guns were of a new type: unlike the guns of the time made of long forged and cylinder-welded metal tanks. These were made of a single iron plate wound and belted, every ten centimeters, by about twenty large metal ferrules [or strapping rings], expanded by heating and then cooled in position. Between these narrow rings, wide, cylindrical rings doubled the thickness of the metal plates. These guns must therefore be more powerful, since the pressure loss was less thanks to the greater sealing. Interesting novelty: the compression cylinder

[71] ●Which added 24 or 25 extra tons above the waterline.
[72] ●And reported in the National Geography Magazine of May 1983, 425 years later.

heads were removable[73]. The gunners removed them, loaded them with powder and cast iron or stone balls and put them back in place. The projectiles split on impact and exploded into a bunch of dangerous anti-personnel shrapnel. The section of the painting of the British Museum[74] shows the beginning of the fight: on the left, the *Marine Royale* is not visible.

We can see that some boats try to rescue the rare survivors of The MARIE-ROSE which has just disappeared in the water, whose top of two masts with the colors of England can still be seen.

Summary of the Action: On July 18th, 1545, the English fleet was anchored at the eastern entrance of Spithead[75]. King Henry VIII was dining with his admiral aboard The MARIE-ROSE when he learned that the French were arriving. He landed hastily and the fleet set sail. The French Baron de La Garde, sent as a scout with four French galleys, approached and was immediately enveloped by 14 English ships. But it was quickly cleared by Admiral d'Annebault who followed with other galleys at the time when the rest of the English fleet came out *en masse* from the roadstead of Chichester to support his vanguard. Faced with this counterattack, the English soon retreated by clutching the land in order to take shelter, under the fires of Portsmouth, in a roadstead protected by shoals which allowed the ships to penetrate only one by one through a tight and winding channel. This sudden retreat, at nightfall, ended the first phase of the battle.

The French ships waited there all night. On July 19, 1545, in the early morning, the sea was calm. The French again took the initiative thanks to the wind that was for them. The English ships, motionless, were violently assaulted by the French galleys who riddled them with projectiles, under the eyes of the King of England motionless on a coastal cliff. He had stayed to

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[73] ●Four rings allowed four men to lift them to supply them. Compare this to the conautric bladed cannon described at the siege of Châliers in 1380, 165 years earlier.
[74] ●Presented in the same May 1983 review.
[75] ●Channel separating the Isle of Wight from Portsmouth, the Royal Navy will often carry out its naval reviews, between the two world wars, in the twentieth century.

encourage his fleet. After an hour of fighting, the huge English ship, The MARIE-ROSE, sank while trying to turn *tack for tack* to fire from the other side. George Carew, its captain, perished with his men; only 30 could be saved.

The GRAND-HENRI[76], John Dudley's English flagship, despite its 122 guns[77] and 700 crewmen, was so damaged that it would also have sunk without the help of its neighbors. Then the land wind rose and the English fleet finally rushed on the galleys which, taking advantage of the same wind, returned to the high seas in order to attract the English. Shorter than the French galleys and therefore more maneuverable, the English *pinnaces*[78] took advantage of the fact that the galleys did not have stern artillery[79] to trigger a very precise fire of all their guns on this part of their hull. Then, the French admiral d'Annebault, offshore, signaled to *advance in battle* towards the English fleet which was pursuing the galleys. Seeing this, the English fleet turned around to quickly downgrade behind the pitfalls. Eager to lure him out of his inaccessible refuge, the French galleys carried out, for tactical purpose[80], three simultaneous landings in sight of the enemy. Léon Strozzi burned a fort that was beating the flanks of the French galleys, La Garde and the colonel-general of infantry, Jean de Taix, seized another point of support, located in the Isle of Wight.

During the night of the 20th to the 21st, the wind had strengthened, coming from the west and the French ships threatened to run aground on the shoals of Chelsea and Owers. Anticipating that the English would not leave the safety of their refuge and that, moreover, a storm might come to disperse or, at worst, to undermine the French fleet, Admiral d'Annebault

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[76] ●This is Henry VIII of England, of course.
[77] ●This made it one of the most armed ships of the time, even if some pieces were of a very small caliber.
[78] ●*Roberges* in French.
[79] ●To cover their backs.
[80] ●To destroy coastal batteries.

gave the order to abandon the blockade of the Royal Navy, which remained on the defensive.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown. The MARIE-ROSE alone lost nearly 700 men, drowned in the capsizing and sinking.

Consequence of this English defeat: After the abandonment of the blockade of the Royal Navy by the French, the English fleet, believing in a ruse, remained for a long time in its refuge, leaving the French to land in the Isle of Wight to ravage it with impunity.

Sources & Readings ●The Mary Rose. The Excavation and Raising of Henry VIII's Flagship, Margaret Rule, préfacé par HRH The Prince of Wales, Editions Windward, Leicester, 1 982. ●The History of the French, Walloon, Dutch, and Other Foreign Protestant Refugees Settled in England, from the Reign of Henry VIII to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, etc., John Southerner Burn, Longman & Co., London , 1846. ●How did Church Property pass from Catholics to Anglicans under Henry VIII from Anglicans to Protestants under Edward VI, from Protestants back to Catholics under Mary; and again from Catholics to Protestants under Elizabeth. A letter to the Rev. George Venables, etc., William Clément, Edit. M, Andrews, London, 1862. ●The History of the Life, Victorious Reign, and Death of King Henry VIII containing an account of his wars and victories... To which is added a compendium, of the life and reign of that glorious and pious prince King Edward the Sixth, H, Rodes, London, 1682. ●King Henry VIII's Mary Rose, Alexander MacKee, Souvenir Press, London, 1973. ●The Anatomy of Neptune, from King Henry VIII to the Présent Day, par William Curhhert et Brian Tunstall, G, Routledge & Sons, London, 1936. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, 6 vol. London.

Naval Battle of Boulogne.

Date of action: August 15th, 1545.

Location: French port of the North Sea, pronounced "*Boleyn*" in the Middle Ages. Geographic coordinates: 50° 72' north latitude and 01°58' east longitude[81].

Conflict: French participation in the War of Scottish Independence, which England sought to annex.

Background: Coming from Portel [port located 3km from Boulogne] where the French Admiral D'Annebault had landed 4000 soldiers and 3000 pioneers to besiege Boulogne [now an English city], the French fleet arrived on August 9th off Rye. It included nearly 150 sails. The reinforced English fleet reached the same number of ships and 12,000 men.

Military leaders in Command ●English Admiral John Dudley[82]. ●French admiral and marshal Claude d'Annebault.

Military Forces involved ●150 sails on both sides. The English had 12,000 men and the French probably the same number.

Strategy or Tactics: The plan of attack of the English admiral John Dudl eywas to arrange his fleet in three lines. In advance, 6 great Hanseatic[83] hourques" including The MARY of

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[81] ●Remember that the geographical coordinates of this work have been evaluated before the creation of GPS, and that therefore, they are approximate.

[82] ●John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland [1,502-1,553], became Viscount Lisle and Lord High Admiral and later Earl of Warwick. He helped Somerset invade Scotland and crush the Scots at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547. He executed the same Somerset, now a political rival, in 1552. The following year he conspired and plotted for the English monarchy to fall into the hands of his family, thereby excluding Henry VIII's two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary Tudor. His sexist behavior cost him dearly. In August 1553, Mary Tudor, now queen, ended his long political career as head of England by having his head *cut off for* high treason.

[83] ●The Hanseatic League or Hanse was a grouping of trading cities in northwestern Germany, headed by Lübeck. The Hanseatic League dates back to 1241; its purpose was to protect the trade of the German cities against the pirates of the Baltic Sea and to

Hamburg. In the center, 10 large ships including The HENRI-GRACE-DE-DIEU. Behind, 16 large ships.

On each wing, 11 large flanking ships. Smaller vessels would support the whole. The English fleet would rush on the French into which it would have to enter like a wedge. The English first line would then have to turn around and take the Français backwards by attacking them in the back, while the second and third lines would form the *second jaw of the pincer.* On the wings, the cruisers, which would not take part in the initial shock, would serve as tactical reserves. They should go to the assistance of the vessels that would have the underside.

Summary of the Action: On the evening of August 13th, learning of the imminent arrival of the English, the French admiral formed a battle near Boulogne, his ships cornered on the shore. The galleys of La Garde sheltered from the wind, intactical reserve behind a tongue of land. Unconcerned with glory, laurels and bliss, D'Annebault[84] sent the King message after message to ask for permission to... return to Le Havre.

On August 14th, an express letter gave him the answer: "*Combattez first!*" The galleys were therefore ordered on the evening of the 14th, to look for the Englishmen whom they found on August 15th, at the height of Shoreham. The English column [head to the east and tail to the north, roberges and other cruisers on the wings] consisted of 24 Flemish hourques

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defend their franchises, i.e. their monopolies, against the neighboring princes. The Hanseatic League was more or less the German counterpart of the English Cinque Ports, on whose model the League was founded. Hamburg, Bremen, Lübeck and Cologne were the main centres. This political, commercial, and military confederation, which flourished for several centuries and extended its trade far and wide, numbered, at the end of the 15th century, 64 cities, possessed fleets, an army, a treasury and a particular government. The League had connections with the Cinque Ports in England and as far as Novgorod in Russia. The Hanseatic League, which had been in decline since the 16th century, opened its last ports to general trade in 1723.

[84] Claude d'Annebaut, Marshal and Admiral of France Minister of François 1st, He victoriously defended Turin against Charles V. He died in 1552 at La Fère. At the time of this naval battle of Boulogne, he was plagued by the famous *War Chief Syndrome before the battle*: the *fear of losing everything with a single roll of the dice*.

accompanied by 10 other ships carrying 3,800 men to the vanguard[85], 40 ships-of-the-line loaded with 6,846 men [Admiral Dudley] and a light squadron of 40 galeasses[86] and roberges in flank guards[87] mounted by 2092 men. A formidable Royal Navy!

It was the light squadron that supported the French shock. The French galleys of La Garde took speed at the head of the English column in order to have it under the wind and to bombard it. The flanking galleys, The GRAUNDE-MAISTRESSE[88], The ANNE-GALAUNTE[89] [vice-admiral Legge], The GREYHOUND and The GALLEY-SUBTILE [Captain Edgar Jones opposed a violent fire to the French advance. The artillery of the French galleys returned fire. The GREYHOUND and the GALLEY-SUBTILE, the two most powerful ships of the squadron, were seriously damaged as well as a roberge. After casting off his broadsides, La Garde turned to draw the English towards the main body of the French fleet. But Pierre Strozzi [and his four galleys] did not follow him; wanting to keep the advantage of wind[90], he rushed against the main body of the English fleet [Admiral Dudley], soon followed by five or six other galleys. Finally, La Garde himself, seeing that his captain had not followed him, returned to lend him a hand.

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[85] ●Under the command of Vice-Admiral Thomas Clere.

[86] ●Galley or galley: a ship with oars and sails that was heavier than a galley. In fact, the essential difference between the galley or the galley-ship consisted in the fact that the former [the galley] had its "' swimming chamber [where the galley slaves were housed] in the open air, while the galley-ship had it covered and topped with a day deck formed of gratings [latticework of slats that closed the hatches allowing daylight to pass through] that served for maneuvering the sails, but weighed down the ship. The artillery, rather weak and badly arranged, consisted of 34 cannons and 10 pierriers.

[87] ●Admiral William Tyrrell and Vice Admiral Legge.

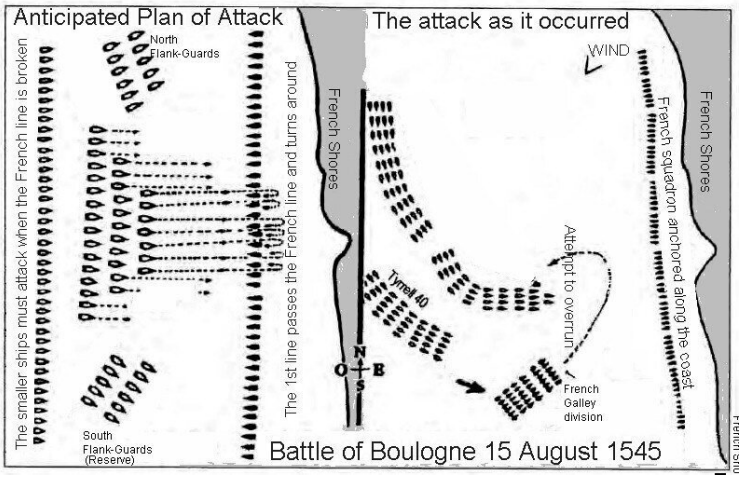
[88]● Admiral Tyrrell: or Grand-Mistress in old French, Henry VIII's mother tongue.

[89] ●ANNE-GALAUNTE or Galante; this was also Anne de Boleyn or de Boulogne, a French woman born in this city, and Henry VIII's mistress in title. Anne was accused of adultery by Jeanne Seymour [abbreviation of Saint-Maurice] and beheaded at the Tower of London. Anne Boleyn was the mother of the future Queen Elizabeth.

[90] ●It must be understood that even if, at the time of the battle, the galleys were not propelled by the wind but by the oars, they were to prevent the English vessels from taking advantage of the wind.

But the Royal Navy, instead of continuing the battle which had lasted two long hours, retreated to Beachy Head[91], abandoning the battlefield to the French squadron.

Losses ●Unknown.



Consequence of this English defeat: Instead of following the routed English, Admiral d'Annebault, who had fought only on the express orders of the King, hastened to go and disarm at Le Havre, where the population received him very coldly precisely because of the fact that he had not pursued the English to try to destroy their fleet.

Sources & Readings ●John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, 1504-1553, David Loades, Clarendon Press, Oxtord, 1996. ● The Protectorate and the Northumberland Conspiracy. Political Intrigue in tbc Reign of Edward VI. An Analysis of Machiavellian Politics in Tudor England during the "Common Rule" of Somerset and Northumberland, 1547-1553, Daniel Patrick Brown, Golden West Historical Publica-tions, Ventura, California, 1981. ●Histoire maritime de France contenant L'Histoire des Provinces et villes maritimes des combats de mer, depuis la

[91] ●Beauchef for the French, by euphony.

fondation de Marseille, 600 ans avant J.-C., de la Flibuste, des Navigations, Voyages autour du monde, Naufrages célèbres, découvertes, Colonisations, de la Marine en général, avant, pendant et depuis le règne de Louis XIV jusqu'à l'année 1850, par Léon Guérin, Dufour et Mulat éditeurs, Paris, 1851.

Naval combat at Chef-de-Caux.

Date of action: July 3rd, 1545.

Location: In the Middle Ages, a place located at the mouth of the Seine River, Normandy, France [now *Sainte-Adresse*]. Geographic coordinates: 49° 30' North latitude and 00" 05' East longitude. It is at the end of the Cap de La Hève, nestled under the cliff, that the port and the houses of Chef-de-Caux were grouped together.

Conflict: The hostilities between France and the Empire of Charles V [Charles Quint]] were not at a standstill[92]. The Franco-Imperial war started in 1542 and the Anglo-French war (8 July 1543). They were highly active in the conflicts of 1545–1546. French expeditions to Scotland in the summer of 1543 was partly impeded by the stationing of an English fleet in the western route. It was also the most serious cross-Channel conflict in the first half of the sixteenth century. A fleet of at least 250 ships was joined in Normandy by an army of 25-30,000 men**.** For most of 1544, French naval forces remained dispersed in the face of the joint Anglo-Imperial invasion forces. Clearly, up to the end of 1544 naval combat between England and France was characterized by either skirmishing in the Channel or by transporting forces to Scotland but there are signs that a broader strategy was being considered in 1544.

Military Leaders in Command: Admiral Lisle in England and admiral d'Annebault in France.

Military Forces involved ●*English*: 64 ships. As for the numbers of ships the English could command in 1545, an intelligence report sent to Charles V [Charles Quint] in February suggested that the English could now send out 80–100 armed ships. At the start of June, Lisle [English Admiral] had assembled 160 ships with 12,000 men aboard. ●*French*: 3,000 men and 500 horses. The French fleet was made up of two components: the *Armée de Mer du Levant* (the galley fleet stationed in the Mediterranean) and *Armée de Mer du Ponant*

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[92] ●Inspired by Guérin, Histoire maritime de France Vol. II.

(stationed in the Atlantic French ports). Both fleets were commanded by a *lieutenant-général*.

The French fleet finally made its way out of Le Havre on 17th July. Annebault was in command of the main battle squadron, with Taix in command of the van and Boutières of the rear-guard. Salvoes of artillery were answered from the cliffs of Chef-de-Caux where the King was watching. The Papal nuncio, writing from Harfleur, estimated the fleet at 300 sails, carrying, besides the sailors, 15,000 soldiers either Gascons or Spaniards, not counting 4,000 pioneers.

Strategy or Tactics: The English wanted to **1**-prevent a French landing in England, **2**-maintain a link with Calais, their bridgehead on the Continent, **3**-stop the supply convoys that the French were sending to the Scots whom the English wanted to subjugate. Mass assault on the English line of the French and their Genovese mercenary galleys, more maneuverable thanks to their oars. In 1543–1544, the English divided their fleet between keeping the Narrow Seas secure, and protecting operations in Scotland. In addition, Henry himself was keen to use his ships to cripple the Franco-Flemish herring fisheries. During the campaign in the Channel, in 1545, Boulogne was attacked three times by the English from Calais during the first half of the 16th century. Boulogne fell into English hands in September 1544, but was immediately re-assaulted in October by French troops. It was not until the siege led by Henry II (in 1549 and 1550) and the Treaty of Outreau, signed on 24th March 1550 (with a bribe of 400,000 gold ecus), that the town became French again. A permanent French military base on the Isle of Wight would have meant diverting the English fleet from pressure on Boulogne. Martin du Bellay, finally quite high up in the French command structure, summed up the objectives as dislodging the English from Boulogne by pressure on land and sea. The French fleet would be great enough to be able to meet the English fleet and interrupt communications between England and Boulogne while the (French) land army advanced 'and as the opportunity presented itself, land in England. What were the French fleet's strategic and tactical objectives? Invasion of England was not

the primary aim. Establish a foothold on or near the Isle of Wight as a bargaining counter for Boulogne. The French made reconnaissance up to Saint Helen's Point (Nettlestone's Point) revealed an English fleet of 60 good ships at Spithead and in the Solent, which came out of harbour to fight, favoured by the wind, though then retreated under cover of the fortresses around Portsmouth, which had been strengthened in the summer of 1544.

Summary of the Action: At Chef-de-Caux, on July 3rd, 1545, 64 English ships were assaulted two or three times by the French, galleys and ships [Pierre Strozzi][93]. Then a storm arose and the English sailed away, pursued by two galleys which thus kept contact.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.

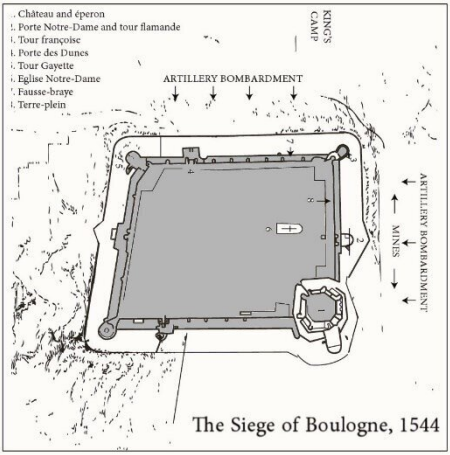
Consequence of this English defeat: Chef-de-Caux was unblocked. In July 1545, the French lieutenant-general Montgomery de Lorges left Brest for Scotland with an expeditionary force of 3,000 men and 500 horses. He sailed around the English Cape Land's End[94] to land at Dumbarton [Scotland] on July 3rd, 1545. At the end of the new Franco-Scottish agreement of December 15th, 1543, the Scots resumed hostilities with an army of 28,000 men.

Sources & Readings ●P. Contamine, *Histoire militaire de la France*, vol..I (Paris, 1992).●Vita e gesta di Piero Strozzi fiorentino, maresciallo di Francia, scritta sui documenti origi-nali, per Francisco Trucchi..., Firenze, 1847. ●British Battles on Land and Sea, James Grant, of the 62nd Regiment, 3 vols, London, 1873. ● Galères et galériens, Bernard Briais, Éditions L'Ancre de Marine, Saint-Malo, 1995. ●La galériens, vies et destins de 60 000 forçats sur les galères de France, 1680-1748, André Zysberg, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1991. ●Du Bellay, Mémoires,

[93] ●Pierre [Piero) Strozzi, marshal of France, served François I. He fought and died at the siege of Thionville. The Strozzis were members of a wealthy Florentine banking family that provided poets, statesmen and warriors.
[94] ●The English Finisterre; exact translation.

IV. Pp.282-283. .● E.L. Potter, Henry VIIIth and Francis I[st], The Admirals' Ear, Chapter 8. Brill Academic Publishers.

E.L. Potter, Henry VIII and Francis I,

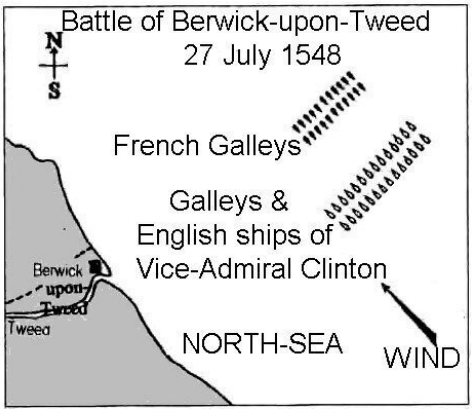


Naval Battle of Berwick-Upon-Tweed.

Date of action: July 27th, 1548.

Location: Berwick-upon-Tweed was a portuary fortress located, of course, on the Tweed, the natural border of Scotland. Geographic coordinates: latitude 55° 46' N and longitude 02° 00' W.

Conflict: Anglo-Scottish War. French participation. France and England had been officially at peace since June 17th, 1546. The war between France and the Germanic Empire of Charles V also slowed momentarily.



Background: A French convoy succeeds in breaking the British blockade of Scot-land established in the North Sea by Vice-Admiral Wyndham with 8 large cruisers. When the large fleet of 140 sails arrived in June 1548, the Royal Navy[95]

[95] ●Vice Admiral Clinton. This fine Henry VIII who constituted a royal navy of large armed warships, heavy guns and a Naval Administration, ancestor of the Admiralty of England. This king can therefore be considered the true founder of the Royal Navy, which took, as we said above, the relay of the squadrons of the Cinque Ports. However, it was Charles 11 who gave the name of Royal Navy to this royal fleet, Henry VIII attributed to his largest ships the names of his mistresses, in French: The GRAUNDE-MAISTRESSE (Grand Mistress), The ANNE-GALAUNTF. (Anne Boleyn Galante), The MAISTRESSE. Culturally speaking, Henry VIII was more francophone than anglophone.

squadron, which was supporting Lord Grey's operations, remained safe in the shelter of Holy Island. The French vanguard was reported off Berwick.

On 17th June, the French fleet landed its troops unopposed in the harbor of Leith, the fortified port of Edinburgh. Its geographical location is similar to that of Piraeus in relation to Athens (i.e. far from the city that the port served).

While Lieutenant-General Montalembert d'Esse marched on the town of Haddington, the French galleys harassed Vice-Admiral Clinton and bombarded Broughty Craig.

Strategy or Tactics: The oars of the galleys and galeasses allowed to maneuver without taking into account the vagaries of the wind, and this kind of ship was certainly a major asset in a naval combat.

Summary of the Action: On July 27, the French galleys attacked the English fleet. The very calm sea favoured rowing. The galleys sank the English ship The PENSÉE and inflicted serious damage on The GALÈRE D'ANGLETERRE. Moreover, on August 3rd, The GALÈRE D'ANGLETERRE and The MAISTRESSE, launched themselves after two isolated French galleys, which were actually being used as bait, were ambushed and managed to escape riddled with cannonballs.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: Although not compromising tactically, this defeat had statistical repercussions: it allowed the French to continue with impunity to help the Scots in their resistance against the English annexation.

Sources & Readings ● Histoire de la marine militaire au Havre (XVI et XVII siècles). Alphonse-Adolphe Martin, Imprimerie de M.-L. Durand, Fécamp, 1899. ●Histoire de la marine, Courtlandt Canby, translated from English by Charles-Alberi Reichen, Éditions Rencontre, Lausanne, Switzerland, 1962. ●The history of Berwick-upon-Tweed and its vicinity. To which is

added a correct copy of the Charter granted to that borough, Thomas Johnstone, J, Reid and J. Wilson, Berwick, 1817.

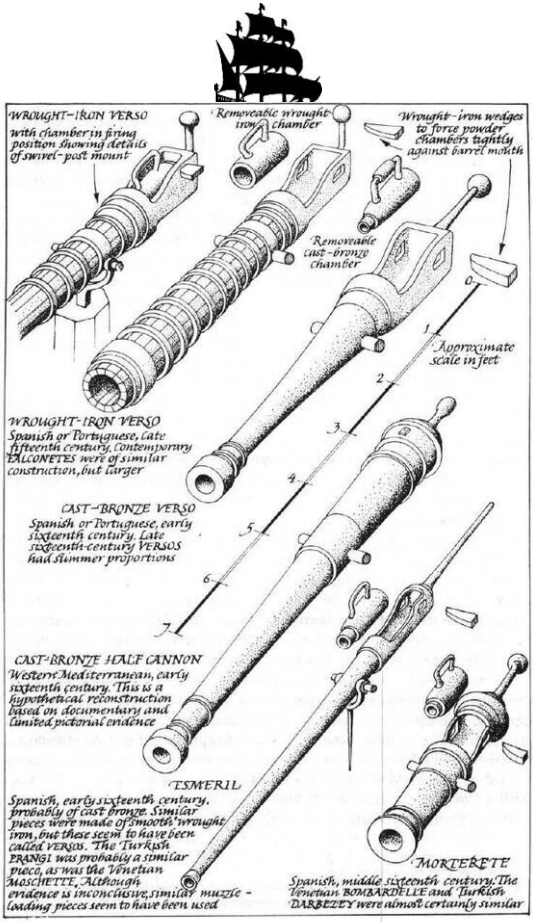


Fig. 7 Naval swivel guns of the sixteenth-century Mediterranean

Naval combat of Dover.

Date of action: 30th August 1548.

Location: English coast of the Channel. Approximate Geographical coordinates: 51°08' North latitude and 01°19' East longitude.

Conflict: Anglo Scottish war; French participation. France and England were officially at peace since June 17th, 1546.

Context: The regent of Scotland, the French Marie de Guise, mother of Marie Stuart, had launched an appeal to France, which sent a fleet in June 1548.

Military Leaders in Command ●*French*: vice-admiral de La Meilleraye. ●*English*: Admiral William Howard,

Military Forces involved: ●*English*: 18 warships. ●*French*: the convoy included about forty troop transports and a single escort galley.

Strategy or tactics: unknown.

Summary of the Action: Sickness and hunger were rampant among the crews of the transports of the French Expeditionary Corps to Scotland. The Scots for any other reason (no doubt out of greed), refused to give food to the French who had come to help them. Every day, many dead sailors were being immersed. Vice-Admiral de La Meilleraye, who did not want to requisition food in this too poor country, decided to leave Scotland and return to France. A few warships were given the task of escorting the empty transport ships. Now, off Dover, the stragglers, escorted by a single warship, came upon the 18 warships of William Howard's squadron. After a furious fight, 12 tail ships fell into the hands of the English.

Consequence of this French defeat: As a result of this defeat, twelve French transports were taken. The English losses are unknown.

Sources & Readings ●The Book of Dover. Cinque Port, Port of the Passage, Gateway to England, Ivan Green, Barracuda Books, Chesham, 1978. ●Flodden: the Anglo-Scottish War of 1513, Charles Kightly, Almark Publishing, London, 1975. ●The Scottish War of Independence: a Critical Study, by Evan Macleod Barron, J. Nisbet & Co, London. 1914. ●For the Lion; a History of the Scottish Wars of Independence, by Raymond Campbell Paterson, Publisher: John Donald, Edinburgh, 1996. ●Navies and Nations; Warships, Navies and State Building in Europe and America, 1500-1860, Jan Glete, Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm, 1993. ●Warfare at Sea, 1500-1650; Maritime Conflicts and the Transformation of Europe, Jan Glete, Publication Routledge, London, 2000.

Naval Battle of Leith.

Date of action: early July 1549.

Location: Leith is located at the mouth of the estuary, named Water of Leith, which bathes the city of Edinburgh in Scotland, a little inland. Geo-graphical coordinates: 55°59' N, 03°10' W.

Conflict: Anglo-Scottish War: French participation. France and England were officially at peace since June 17th, June 1546.

Context: "Open war with France was resumed in 1549. Henry II of France attacked Boulogne [English]; and Léon Strozzi, with twelve galleys convoying transports with two thousands troops, blockaded Jersey and Guernsey. It was then that Captain William Wynter, who, under Elizabeth, showed himself to be a commander of unusual ability, first began to build up his reputation, although he has served as early as 1544 during the operations in the Firth of Forth. Entrusted with a small squadron and eight hundred soldiers, he, in spite of his inferior force, so boldly attacked Strozzi that he took or burnt all his galleys, killed a thousand of his men, and drove the rest of the expedition ignominiously back to France[96]."

In England, "a fleet of 65 sails, including 34 large ships and one galley, was placed under the command of Admiral Edward, Lord Clinton, and Vice-Admiral Sir William Woodhouse, and a large army under Somerset in person. They marched northward[97]. On September 10th, the Scots were defeated with an enormous slaughter at *Pinkie Cleuch*, near Musselburgh, the fleet cooperating with great effect on the Scots flank. Leith was taken immediately afterwards and Edinburgh plundered. But in spite of this decisive English triumph, and of the damage done along the coast by the English fleet, which burnt many Scottish

[96] William Laird CLOWES Vol.1, p.469
[97] ●Speed, p.804; Holinshed, Vol. II, p.980; Buchanan, vol. XV; Keith, p.53.

towns, and practically annihilated the little Scots squadron, the Scots were more than ever determined to oppose the English '*marriage*', and more than ever inclined to further a French one. Some people are discouraged by difficulties; others feel stimulated to resist oppression. France reciprocated in 1548 by sending to Scotland 6,000 men under André de Montalembert, Baron d'Essé, and by carrying into practice a cleverly laid scheme for the transport of Mary Stuart, the subject of the dispute, from Scotland to Brittany.

Villegagnon, [French] Vice-Admiral of Brittany, commanded the squadron which conveyed the French expeditionary corps to Scotland[98]. He landed the troops at Dunbar on June 18th."

In the winter of 1549, the English fleet stayed in the Gulf of Morbihan to counter the junction of two French squadrons, the galleys[99] and the large warships[100]. Together they were to deliver reinforcements to the French Expeditionary Force which was fighting in Scotland to help this Nation resist the annexationist aims of the English. The English fleet took advantage of its stay on the French coast to burn down some small villages in Brittany: Locmariaker, 20 km from Vannes... and to sack the islets of Houat and Haedic.

Strategy or Tactics: Gun battle.

Summary of the Action: At the beginning of July 1549, Montalembert d'Essé left Scotland after having handed over command of the French Expeditionary Corps to his successor, Paul de Thermes. The flotilla of four galleys left Leith, the port of Edinburgh, but was soon surrounded by the vastly superior English fleet which sought to intercept it. A violent battle ensued. The galleys were in danger of succumbing to their numbers when, in the heat of the action, a French projectile blew up the powder magazine of a large English roberge, throwing their line

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[98] ●Clowes, Vol.1 p.467
[99] ●From Nantes, where *Le Clos des Galées* or Closed Port for Galleys was located.
[100] ●Based in Brest.

into disarray. The four French galleys were then able to continue on their way and reach Dieppe after a nine-day crossing.

Casualties & Losses ●The human losses are unknown on both sides. On the English side, they seem much heavier due to the loss of one of their ships whose crew was lost.

Consequence of this English failure: The former head of the French Expeditionary Corps in Scotland managed to slip through the blockade lines.

Sources & Readings ●Edinburgh and the Reformation, Michael Lynch, J. Donald Publication, Edinburgh, 1981. ●The Story of Edinburgh, Oliphant Smeaton, Herbert Railton and J. Ayton Symington, Kraus Reprint, Nendeln, 1971. ●L'Histoire de la guerre d'Ecosse, traitant comme le royaume fut assailly, en grande partie occupé par les Anglais, & depuis rendu paisible à sa reyne, & réduit en son ancien estat & dignité, Jean de Beaugué, Bordeaux, 1862. ● Mémoires sur la Fortification Perpendiculaire, par plusieurs officiers du corps royal du génie, C. R. Fourcroy de Ramecourt, Paris, 1786.

Naval raid on Saint-Pierre.

Date of action: 31st July, 1549.

Location: Guernsey Island, English Channel Archipelago, Today Saint-Pierre-Port [Saint-Peter-Port]. Geographic coordinates: latitude 49°27' N, longitude 02° 32' W.

Conflict: Anglo-Scottish War; French participation. France and England were officially at war since August 8th, 1549, when France declared war on England. The war between France and the Empire of Charles V was temporarily suspended, until 1551.

Background: The Regent of Scotland, the Frenchwoman Marie de Guise, had appealed to France who had sent another expeditionary force to Scotland in June 1548. This was, in fact, what reignited hostilities between France and England.

Strategy or tactics: Surprise was the major element in the success of this attack. But how could the English squadron sleep when the neighboring island had just been invaded by the French?

Summary of the Action: While a French squadron had just occupied Sark and fortified it, the squadron of galleys went to surprise Guernsey where the English squadron was sleeping. Most of the English officers slept on the ground. Under the edges of the French artillery, the English ships sank one after the other. The English flagship[101] was about to succumb in its turn, and the English sailors be massacred, when the castle of Guernsey, finally waking up, began to bombard the French ships. The cannons of the castle, in high position, could be heard throughout

[101] ●The MIGNONNE, Let us recall that at this time, many ships of the Royal Navy may have French names of the King's mistresses. French was the mother tongue of King Edward VI of England, as well as of his father Henry VIII Tudor. The MIGNONNE was named by Henry VIII, creator of the Royal Navy. Until then, the war fleet was supplied by the Cinque Ports of England.

the island. A French galley was badly damaged and had to be towed to the island of Sark. Another took the French wounded to Rouen.

Casualties & Losses: Unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: After this raid, the French squadron of galleys entered Boulay Bay, Jersey. A landing company marched on the village of Trinidad where it burned the house of the "Justicier Juré". Then the squadron headed for Saint-Malo where it took a break.

Sources & Readings ●A History of the Bailiwick of Guernsey, The Islander' Story, L. James Marr, Chichester, Phillimore, 1982. ●The History of Çastle Cornet, Guernsey, par Bryan Hugh St. John O'Neil, States of Guernsey Ancient Monuments Committee, 1981. ●Reformation and Society in Guernsey, Darryl Mark Ogier, Woodbridge, Boydell, 1996. ●The History of the Island of Guemsey [.. .] from the remotest period of antiquity to the year 1814, Containing an interesting account of the island; its government, civil, military and ecclesiastical ; peculiar privileges, customs, etc. With particulars of the neighbouring islands of Alderney, Serk, and Jersey; compiled from the valuable collections of... Henry Budd [...] as well as from authentic documents, etc., William Berry, of the Collège of Arms, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown; John Hatchard, London, 1815.

Naval Battle of La Rochelle.

Date of action: October 8th, 1563.

Location: The Breton Pertuis is the strait located between the island of Ré and the coast of Vendée. Cap des Aiguilles[1] is immediately at the mouth of the Charente. Geographic coordinates: 46° 10' north latitude and 01° 10' west longitude.

Conflict; First War of Religion [in France], 1562-1563. English aid to French Protestants.

Context: In France, it is the civil war or first war of religion, 1562-1563. "On March 12th, 1563, the French Protestant and Catholic leaders concluded peace at Amboise; and, as the English continued to hold Le Havre, formal war between France and England was declared on July 7th, and the re-united parties combined to press with equal energy the siege of the town, under the direction of the Constable Anne de Montmorency. Warwick held out until the 28th, a fleet of 60 sails, sent to seccour him, arriving only in time to carry off his forces. The campaign was put an end to on April 11th, 1564, by the Treaty of Troyes. In virtue of this, the French queen-mother agreed to pay a ransom of 120,000 crowns to England; free trade between the two countries was conceded; and French hostages in English hands were released[2]."

Strategy or tactics: On 20 September 1562, the Queen of England, Elizabeth Ist Tudor, signed the Treaty of Hampton Court with the French Protestants. In exchange for her help, which was far from disinterested: they would let her occupy Le Havre.

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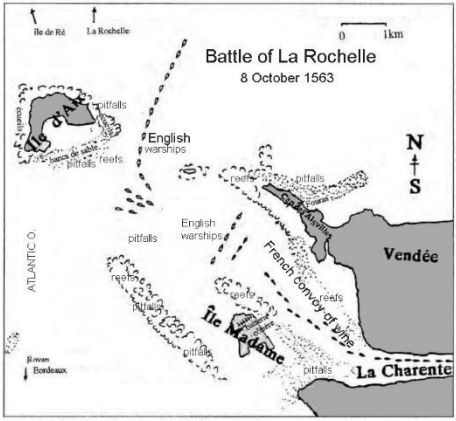
[1] ●Or Pointe des Aiguilles.
[2] ●Clowes 1, p.477

Elisabeth was all the more interested in being awarded Le Havre, as she was already worried about not recovering Calais, ceded to France for only eight years by the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis [in 1559]. England proposed to France to exchange Le Havre for Calais, but Charles IX of France refused and preferred to retake Le Havre by siege to recover both.



On October 8th, 1563, a strong English squadron of 25 warships appeared in the Breton Pertuis as a French convoy of wine left La Rochelle. The convoy immediately turned back, pursued by the English. Caught near Cap des Aiguilles, the last three French ships of the convoy turned around to face the assailant.

A French coastal battery immediately went into action to help them and the three (armed) wine transports fought valiantly and drove back the English like Chantal Goya's rabbit.

Consequence of this English defeat: Finally, after losing 60 men, the five leading English ships that had engaged in combat... abandoned the game against the three wine transports. Ridiculous situation.

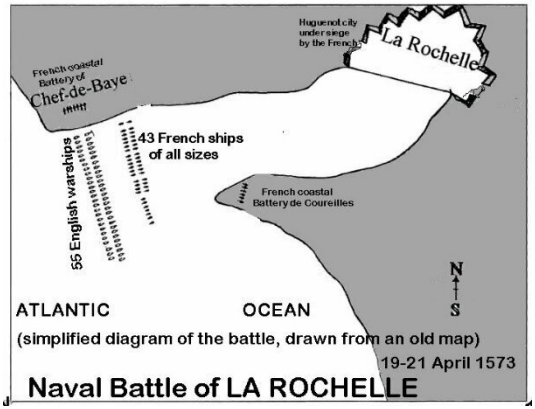
Sources & Readings ●Reformation in La Rochelle; Tradition and Change in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1568, by Judith Chandler Pugh Meyer, Publication Droz, Geneva, 1996. ●The Reformed Church of La Rochelle. Historical study, Louis Delmas, pastor, Toulouse, 1870. ●Expense [. ..] près l'armée des côtes de la Rochelle, Jean François Goupilleau, Garnier (J.) de Saintes, 1795. ●Lembouchement de nostre sainct pere le Pape, l'empereur et le roy faict à Nice, 1538. Voyage du roy François

I. en sa Ville de La Rochelle en l'an 1542. Avec arrest and judgment by luy given for the disobedience and rebellion that luy made the clothesans of icelle. Extracts from the expense accounts of Francis I. Mélanges pour l'histoire de François I, etc. Curious Archives de l'histoire de France, 1st Series, T. 3, 1834.

Naval Battle of La Rochelle.

Date of Faction: 19-21 April 1573.

Location: French Atlantic coast. Geographic coordinates: 46° 10' north latitude and 01° 10' west longitude.



Conflict: In France, it is the civil war: fourth war of religion, 1572-1573. English aid to French Protestants.

Background: La Rochelle, held by the Huguenots, was supported by the English fleet. The city was blockaded and besieged by the French.

Military Leaders in Command ●*English* Fleet: Vice-Admiral Montgomery [3] of Cornwall.

Military Forces involved ●British fleet: 55 warships. The embarked army included 800 arquebusiers and 400 Anglo-Flemish pikemen.

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[3] ●Probably a relative of the English band leader who, at the same time, was travelling through Gascony at the head of Anglo-Huguenot companies in order to plunder, rape and massacre. In 1569, the latter [Montgomery] attacked the city of Lourdes and the Carmelite monastery of Trie-sur-Baïse, Gers, France [monastery whose cloister is on display at the Cloisters Museum in New York City]. This Montgomery threw the 25 defenseless monks into a well [which still exists), under the frightened eyes of the population gathered on the walls of the bastide. At the end of the XIX century, a plaque was affixed to the well which was finally put back in place at the end of the twentieth century [J. Toulayrou].

Strategy or tactics: The ultimate goal of the English, beyond helping the French Protestants, was to recover Guyana and the eternal obsession of the kings of England since the Hundred Years War.

A giant boom had been built by the French to prevent contact with the English relief fleet. An engineer, Louis de Gonzague, Duc de Nevers, had the idea. Thirty-six ships were sunk to create the foundation of the boom. The masts alone emerged. The gaps were barred by floating beams. On the morning of April 18, the French Semaphores[4] announced the arrival of the English relief fleet. The next day 19 appeared 55 sails. It was the English participation in this terrible siege.

Summary of the action: On April 1, 9, the Royal Navy appeared in front of La Rochelle, with 55 warships. A line of about fifteen large English warships, The PRIMROSE in the lead, advanced towards the port. But a French siege battery posted at Chef-de-Baye opened fire and a shot at the goal crossed The PRIMROSE from side to side. The Marine Royale, supported by the land battery, immediately formed into a line of battle of 18 ships of the line and four galleys interspersed between the ships. The siege batteries turned against the English fleet, which lined up in battle a quarter of a league[5] away. But night fell without the English attacking, despite their immense numerical superiority.

During the night, the French fleet was reinforced by a second line to monitor the boom blocking and to prevent any attack from the rear. This second line was formed by the capital Clavet who had hastily armed 22 small merchant ships in war.

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[4] ●The sensitive sectors of the French coasts were equipped with optical semaphores in order to quickly telegraph news having a strategic or tactical impact; an optical semaphore was a wooden post surmounted by a mill whose position of wings, operated by a system of pulleys, indicated a letter of the alphabet. Messages were transmitted from semaphore to semaphore. Chappe's aerial or operational telegraph consisted of semaphore lines. It was replaced by the electric telegraph, more efficient.

[5] ●Environ 1 km; the common league of France equaled the twenty-fifth part of the length of a degree counted on a great circle, comes 4. 445 km.

The next day, 16 ships from Les Sables-d'Olonnes, which had seen the English feast from afar, ran cannoning. Then there were two ships of Brouage[6].

The more the English hesitated to launch a general attack, the more the French fleet grew: 43 ships now faced the Anglo-Huguenot fleet. Then, the French galleys opened fire to "experiment with the range of their guns". The English retaliated. Finally, on the night of 21 April, the Anglo-Huguenot fleet broke off the fight and disappeared.

An Anglo-Huguenot War Council had so decided. The Huguenots were in favour of intervention and the English of retreat. The fleet withdrew to Belle-île-en-Mer.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: La Rochelle was not rescued, to the great despair of the inhabitants who were dying of hunger.

Sources & Readings ●Philippi Caurianœ de obsidione Rupellœ commentarius, History of the siege of La Rochelle in 1573, [translated from the Latin of Philippe Cauriana by L. Délayant], Lat. & De" Société Littéraire de La Rochelle, 1856. ●City on the ocean sea, La Rochelle, 1530-1650; Urban Society, religion, and politics on the French Atlantic frontier, by Kevin C. Robbins, Editions Brill, Leïden, 1997. ●La Rochelle et les Protestants du XVI e au XXe siècle, Nicole Vray La Crèche, Geste, 1999. ●La vie maritime vue à travers les actes de l'Amirauté de La Rochelle, Association Québec-France, Institut francophone de généalogie et d'histoire, Association Québec France, Québec, 1998. ● The Furious charge given to the troops leaving La Rochelle sous the command of Monsieur de Beaulieu. Avec la défaite de quatre cent hommes des dites troupes, & le nombre des prisonniers & tuez, par Monseigneur le Comte

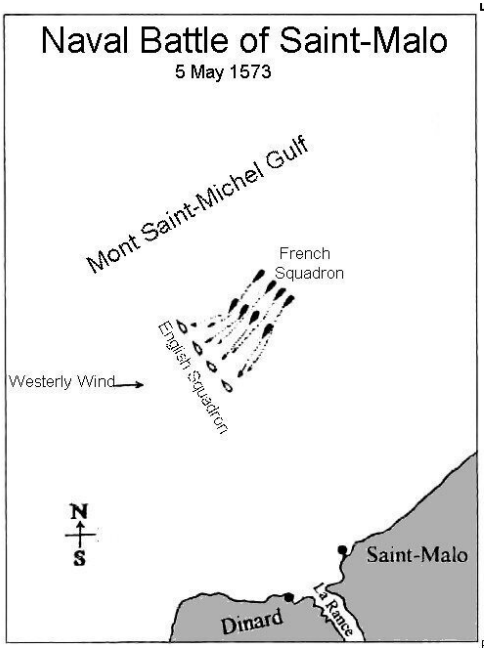
[6] ●City where there was already a 6-year-old child named Samuel de Champlain.

de Soissons, Capitaine de la Rochelle de Beaulieu, René Breter, Paris, 1622.

Naval Battle of Saint-Malo.

Date of action: May 5, 1573

Location: City [and port] of Brittany; located 300 km west of Paris and 80 1cm NW of Rennes. Geographic coordinates: 48° 39' north latitude and 02° 01' west longitude.



Conflicts: In France, it was the Civil War: the Fourth War of Religion, 1572-1,573. English aid to French Protestants.

Background: In exchange for strongholds in France, England pledged to help French Protestants win their case. An English fleet that came to rescue La Rochelle clashed with a French fleet and retreated to Belle-Île which it captured.

Military Forces involved ●*British*: four warships mounted by about 1200 men. ●*French*: about 600 men spread over eight armed merchant ships.

Summary of the action: Montgomery, who since August 28 had occupied Belle-Île on behalf of England, had requested reinforcements and ammunition. Four English warships from Jersey

sailed for Belle-Ile. As soon as the French sailors of Roscoff had notice, they prepared eight merchant ships, armed in war, to intercept them. The two small squadrons met through Saint-Malo two hours before sunset. As the English had the advantage of the wind, they rushed on the French and on May 5, at day-break[7], summoned them to surrender.

It was then that the French ships set out in the line of battle and set off to board the English ships. The English unleashed deadly artillery and cut the grappling hooks to get rid of the French attackers. The fierce fight lasted a *day and a half* at the end of which 300 killed and hundreds wounded covered the English bridges[8]. Finally, on Thursday at 3 a.m., the Royal Navy squadron finally lowered its flag.

Casualties & Losses ●The French had 120 killed and 160 wounded, half of their strength. ●The English, 300 killed and 400 wounded.

Consequence of this English defeat: Receiving no reinforcements, Montgomery could not resist long at Belle-Ile and had to resolve to abandon the sector to the French.

Sources & Readings ●Histoire de Saint-Malo et du pays malouin, edited by André Lespagnol, Editions Privât, Toulouse, 1984. ●Les Corsaires chez eux, Etienne Dupont, Paris, 1925. ●Biography of the famous Malouins born, since the 15th century until today; preceded by a historical notice on the city of Saint-Malo, since its origin, Manet, F. , Publication Saint-Malo, 1824. ●Le Bombardement et la machine infernale des Anglais contre Saint-Malo en 1693, préface de A. de la B., c.a.d. L. A. The Moyne de la Borderie. Société des bibliophiles bretons et de l'histoire de Bretagne, Saint-Malo, Nantes, 1885. ●Ville de Saint-Malo. Inventory-summary of the communal archives prior to 1790, begun by MM. Pesseau and Havard, completed

[7] ●During the night, the buildings had remained on site.

[8] ●Where had taken place the bulk of the fighting, but the French bridges were also, without a doubt, crowded with dead even if the chronicler does not mention it.

by M. Harvut, 1883. ●La Cité bastion de la forteresse de Saint-Malo, R. Fouque, Rennes, Imprimeries Réunies, 1945.

Siege and naval battle of Blaye.

Date of action: 21 December 1592 - 4 August 1593.

Location: Today Blaye-et-Sainte-Luce. City on the right bank of the Gironde, 49 km from Bordeaux, Geographical coordinates: 45°08' north latitude and 00°39' west longitude.

Conflict: War of the Holy Catholic League.

Background: On 11 May, an English fleet of 33 sails was reported, bringing relief to the royalist troops of Henry IV of France: the three English regiments of General Norris, commanded by the Prince of Dombes. Norris asked to occupy Brest on behalf of England, which wanted to repay itself immediately of his military aid to the Protestant King of France, but Henry IV refused it. Then Norris landed his troops at Pimpol.

MilitaryLeaders in command ●*Franco-English*: Lieutenant-General Goyan de Matignon; Vice-Admiral Jaubert de Barrault; Admiral Houghton.

Strategy or tactics: Blockade first, then naval combat with boarding and cannon. Blaye had always occupied a strategic point on the road to Spain which crossed the Gironde at this point. As early as Roman times, the hill had been fortified. A town and a castle with six towers developed during the twelfth century. Initially English, the city became French in 1451. It was necessary to protect access to Bordeaux. "Governor[9] Claude de Saint-Simon (father of Louis) then decided to replace the front towards land[10] a wide dry ditch beaten by a false braie

[9] Writes Nicolas Faucherre, in his work : *Places Fortes, bastions du Pouvoir*, p. 97-98, *see in fine.*

[10] ●It was probably bias to act! [1607-1665] who inspired and directed the work. He was also the inspiration of the great Vauban. It was he who modified the sides of the bastions so that they were perpendicular to the curtain wall. The flanking by cannons, intended to take the ditches in a row, was reinforced by musketry and the height of the parapets limited to allow the "*barbette shot*" *ie* over the parapet, without embrasures.

and two large horseshoe boulevards plastered in front of the gate and the castle; [...] To accommodate a growing garrison, On expelled the inhabitants of the upper town who relocated to the suburbs. The fortified city had become a citadel."

Summary of the action: In the South, Blaye, in the hands of Leaguers, disturbed the maritime traffic of Bordeaux. With English ships he had seized, the leaguer captain Esparbès de Lussan ransomed passing ships. On 21 December 1592, the French army of Lieutenant General Goyan de Matignon, the 14 pat aches of Vice-Admiral Jaubert de Barraul tand the 6 English warships of Houghton's squadron laid siege to Blaye.

On April 18, 1593, 16 Spanish warships and 2 French Pataches defeated the English blockading squadron in a fight lasting several hours. Pursued by the Franco-Spanish squadron, the English admiral blew himself up rather than surrender, but the English flag was still found and exhibited as a trophy by the Franco-Spanish.

Casualties & Losses ●*English*: six warships. Other: unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: The destruction of the Royal Navy squadron was sorely felt.

Sources & Readings ●History of the city of Blaye from its foundation by the Romans to the captivity of the Duchesse de Berry, etc., E., Bellemer, Blaye; Bordeaux, 1886. ●Blaye : Ville d'histoire et de légendes, Arlette Cotton de Bennetot, Editions Berson, La Lombardière, 33390 Blaye, 1990. ● La sentinelle de Bordeaux, Blaye sur la Gironde, Daniel Binaud, Art & arts éd., Bordeaux, 1995. Blaye : porte de Bordeaux, Johel Coutura, Éditions du Glorit, Marcillac, 1988.

Pagan also *advocated staggering defenses* in depth by adding external works that delayed the attack of the corps de place.

Battle of Cherbourg.

Date of action: June 21, 1628.

Location: French port in the English Channel, 110 km northwest of Caen. Geographic coordinates: 49°39' N, 01°39' W.

Conflict: Thirty Years War [1618-1648], Civil War in France. The Wars of Religion are over, but politico-religious conflicts persist in France, with the support of England, which declared war on France in 1627 to support the Huguenot revolt of La Rochelle.

Background: After its failure at La Rochelle, the English fleet, including some 60 ships, returned to England. It was commanded by Earl William Fielding of Denbigh and Vice Admiral Palmer.

Military Leader in command ●*Marine Royale* : François Le Tellier de La Luthumière

Military Forces involved ●Royal Navy: 7 warships.

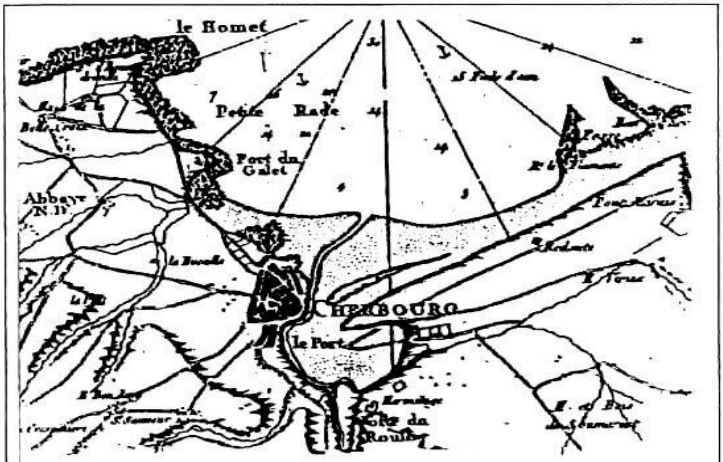
Strategy or tactics: Cannonade first, then boarding and hand-to-hand combat.

Summary of action: The English fleet had left La Rochelle on May 18, 1628. A few weeks later, one of its divisions came across a French division commanded by the governor of Cherbourg: Le Tellier de La Luthumière. Of the 7 warships of the Royal Navy, 3 were sunk after a violent battle and the others captured by the French. No other details are known about this battle, except that it was a cannonade followed by a boarding.

Losses ● The English lost an entire naval division: 3 ships sunk and 4 captured. ● The French losses are not known.

Consequence of this English defeat: the rest of Denbigh's convoy broke up in order to escape the French.

Sources & Readings ●Les Ports militaires de la France: notices historiques et descriptives Cherbourg, Brest, Lorient, Roehefort, Toulon..., M. de Bon, M. Eytnin, M. Do-neaud, M. J. Hébert, Éditions Challamel aine; A. Bertrand, Paris, missing date.●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London.



Cherbourg and its region, at the end of the 17th century.

Naval battle of Chef-de-Baye.

Other name: Siege of La Rochelle,

Date of action: September 28 - October 25, 1628.

Conflict: Thirty Years War [1618-1648]. Civil war in France. The Wars of Religion had ended with the Edict of Nantes, but religious-political conflicts persisted in France, with the encouragement of England, which had declared war on France in 1627.

Background: An attempted siege of the fortress of Saint-Martin-de-l'Île-de-Ré in 1627 provoked the intervention of the Roche! ais on their behalf; as a result, the long and terrible siege of La Rochelle was undertaken by the French royal army. An Anglo-Huguenot relief fleet arrived on May 11, 1628, but a dike had been built by Cardinal de Richelieu to prevent any foreign relief.

Military Leaders in command ●Royal Navy: Lord Morton, Montjoy and Admiral Robert Lindsey.

Military Forces involved ●Royal Navy: in total 1 50 ships, fire-bombs, floating firecrackers, three mineships, each carrying 1 000 pounds of gunpowder, were intended to blow up the booms and to overturn the dike of Richelieu; all with a landing corps of 11 battalions of English infantry: 6000 soldiers.

Strategy or tactics: The English had mine ships loaded with powder and stone intended to blow up the dike, and fire ships to set fire to the French blockade fleet. They also tried tin firecrackers mounted on small wooden rafts. A spring was supposed to cause the explosion as soon as a ship was boarded, but they were all picked up, harmless, by the French. Only one exploded... without harm. Note also the English smoke screen created by the burning of dung boats! It should be noted that mistrust reigned among English officers; some accused the others of cowardice and of wanting to avoid the dangers of battle.

These internal conflicts seem to be one of the consequences of their disastrous retreat from the island of Ré and one of the causes of this new failure. For fear of favoritism, no one wanted to approach and, as a result, the salvos of the Royal Navy could not reach the French,

Built at the end of a channel oriented from southwest to northeast, with an average width of 1,500 m and a length of more than a league, the square of La Rochelle could be provisioned, supplied and rescued by sea. The first enclosure, lined with semicircular medieval towers, crenellated keeps, and 5 well-walled gates, was surrounded by a wide ditch fed by the sea, flanked by more modern bastions with auricles, and ravelins, themselves lined with ditches; the whole protected by glacis and covered paths. The city of the Middle Ages[11] and the Renaissance as well as the war port were enclosed in it. The wall leaned on the channel, on a front of 1200 m; in the middle opened the Sea Gate, barred by an iron chain and flanked by two large towers. Two bastioned forts covered the Saint-Nicolas gate to the east and the Deux-Moulins gate to the west. The enclosure was a trapezium of 4 km, whose eastern side was dug into a curtain wall. In front of this curtain wall, and on a length of 1300 m, a bastioned front formed, between the doors Saint-Nicolas and Congne, a second enclosure which covered the new city, by sparing vast places of weapons for the gathering and the exercises of 30,000 burghers, soldiers or sailors, ready to die for their religion and their independence. The promontory of Chef-de-Baie gave access to the channel, to the South-West, and to the open sea. The Pointe de Coureuil[12] was facing it at the end of the other shore.

Summary of the action: On September 28, the English relief fleet finally arrived in sight of the city where the population was dying of starvation. The Royal Navy was coming out of the Breton and Antiochian Per-tuis. All the bells of La Rochelle were

[11] ●Semi-circular towers and curtain walls.

[12] ●Now called *Pointe des Minimes*, because of the convent that was built there after the siege.

ringing out the joy of the protes-tant people. On October 1st, 150 English warships surrounded the French blockade squadron in a vast arc from Coureuil [or Coureilles] to Chef-de-Baye. On both sides, the night was spent in feverish preparations for battle.

Stimulated by religious fanaticism, French [Catholic] volunteers arrived from all sides. When the king of France wanted to send a courier to Paris, he was obliged to send one of his chaplains, *because no one wanted to miss the action which promised to be most bloody*. Carriages of ladies flocked to see the grandiose spectacle of the battle[13]. The French soldiers assigned to guard the ships [14]4 took their places on board.

To counter any attempt of English landing, all the troops had taken position on the coast: in Chef de-Baye, with the king, in Coureuil with the duke of Angoulème and the marshal de Schomberg. The Chevalier de LaTrémoïlle and the comte d'Alais was ready everywhere to support the infantry. All the actors were in place; the spectators and the directors also; the tragedy could begin.

On October 1, at dawn, the entire Anglo-Huguenot fleet made a general broadside. The land batteries responded with a salvo. Towards noon, with the rising tide, Lindsey had planned to begin the assault. But the dead calm stopped him in his tracks that day and the next.

Lindsey's plan: This offensive plan was based on the principle that the dike could not be attacked until the French fleet covering it had been defeated. He therefore advocated that English units with a small draught should begin the battle by attacking the French squadron stationed at Chef-de-Baye. Burning ships would be directed towards this [French] squadron. One

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[13] ●We were returning to the atmosphere of the *Games of Rome*, but it was no longer to see Christians killed by lions, but rather Christians killing each other in the name of Jesus Christ!

[14] ●These were the many ships that had been sunk or chained to double the Richelieu dam. The French fleet formed a third row of ships in an arc. It was these ships that the English intended to attack.

warship would attack the Pointe de Coureuil and another the Pointe de Chef-de-Baye in order to keep the French coastal batteries occupied. All other Royal Navy units were to remain in Tactical Reserve. But this last decision provoked murmurs from the officers who were to take part in the action: the British captains demanded that no one stay behind. No favoritism; everyone at the same distance from the French. Times had changed since the Hundred Years' War, when the kings of France could not form a tactical reserve, because staying behind was a serious cowardice. No one wanted to stay there. Today, everyone wanted to test it.

At dawn on October 3rd, therefore, the English turned toward the Isle of Aix and then moved against the French squadron deployed in battle along the promontory of Chef-de-Baye. Because of the quarrel that had broken out during the Council of War, in which Admiral Lindsey had been accused of favoritism towards those he wanted to keep in reserve at the beginning of the battle, the Admiral decided to clear himself of all suspicion and to set an example. On board the SAINT-GEORGE, he sailed in the lead until his draught was insufficient and he was forced to stop his ship. The cannonade began. Then the smaller ships of lesser draught, which for this reason could have gone further forward, also stopped and refused to go further; so that, firing from too far away, they wasted their ammunition which fell short! Above them, the great artillery battery of Chef-de-Baye [40 pieces], commanded by the King of France himself, began to crush the English fleet under a deluge of iron. Soon the Royal Navy was forced to retreat.

Several units of the French army had formed up in battle in anticipation of an English landing at Chef-de-Baye as well as at Coureuil. The infantry had formed in squares with a forest of pikes in the center; the cavalrymen in tight squads. The drums beat. Between the two fleets, badly directed English fire-boats were burning uselessly. French boats went to tow them to the coast. Several English ships were damaged. One was even disabled.

On October 4, the battle began again. But despite the admonitions of the English admiral, who had threatened his recalcitrant captains with death, his ships all fired into the water without exception, being too far from the coast. The English sent seven burning manure boats into the wind, which created a formidable smoke screen. But, more concerned with distributive justice than with discipline, they did not take advantage of this ca-mouflage to attack!

The following days, bad weather forced the Royal Navy to take to the sea. Lindsey even opened negotiations with the King of France, which led to a long truce. Then, during the night of October 21, the winds being favorable, four fire ships launched by the French through the Royal Navy squadron forced several ships to stall by cutting their cables.

On October 25, to the great despair of the Huguenots of La Rochelle who were dying of hunger, the English squadron sailed for England without having really broken the French blockade. In their stall, they abandoned a few flutes[15].

Casualties & Losses ●French: about fifty killed. ●Royal Navy: Probably 400 or 500 because of the bombardment by the great Royal Battery of Chef -de- Baye. Lord Lindsey lost 20 ships in the fighting on October 3 and 4. ● Of the 500 or 600 English soldiers left by Buckingham in the city of La Rochelle after this new An-English stall, only 62 skeletal but living soldiers remained at the time of the capitulation. These 62 men were repatriated to England by the Royal Navy.

As a result of this English failure, the hopes of the French Calvinists, who had been drawn into the rebellion by the English initiative[16], were dashed. The city capitulated on October 28. Out of a Rochelaisc population of 28,000, 23,000 -who did not receive their fair share of food- died of hunger or war.

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[15] Flute, *n.f.,* from Dutch Fluit. A wartime ship used for logistical transport. For this purpose, most of the artillery was taken ashore--at least the lower bows--and the lower ports were closed off so that the payload could be increased.
[16] See Saint-Martin, 1627. *supra.*

Louis XIII granted amnesty to the 5,000 survivors who, in essence, had been privileged in having access to the remaining supplies until the end.

In England, this failure, caused by the sabotage of the Roundheads, led to a loss of power on the part of the king, who had to resign himself to sanctioning the Petition of Rights. The conflict between Charles I and Parliament had been going on for a long time. His first parliament had refused to vote funds for the war; he had dissolved it. The king's favorite, the Duke of Buckingham, decided to finance the military operations against Spain himself.

The last Parliament, convened by the king to finance the war, merely called for the dismissal of the disgraced favourite, and was then dissolved.

In 1628, the third Parliament drafted the Petition of Rights, which demanded [1] that the king not levy any taxes without parliamentary approval, [2] that he not imprison citizens without giving reason, [3] that he no longer house soldiers in the homes of private citizens [by permanent billeting], and [4] that he no longer use martial law against civilians.

Charles I finally signed and was thus able to receive his credits to finance the "religious" war against Spain and France[17].

Sources & Readings: ●Journal des assiégés de La Rochelle, 1627-1628, presented and commented by Pierre Villemain, Editions de Paris, Paris. ●Harangue pronounced before the Serene Lordship of Venice, and the Ambassador of the King, on the happy success of his Majesty's arms [at La Ro-chelle], Remond Vidal; translated from Italian into French by the si eut [B. Mi let] de Marcilly, Edition Jean Martin, Paris, 1629. ●Jean Guiton

[17] ●As for Buckingham, he was simply murdered by jealous people; an officer of the Royal Navy was the perpetrator of this crime.

et le siège de La Rochelle, Pierre Blanchon, A. Foucher, La Rochelle, 1911. ●Histoire de La Rochelle, Marcel Delafosse, Privât, Toulouse, 1985.

Naval combat of L'Anse-aux-Papillons.

Date of action: 1629.

Location: St. Christophe Island [St. Kitts]. Geographical coordinates: latitude 17° 20' N, longitude 62° 45' W.

Conflict: Thirty Years' War in theWest Indies; 1618-1648.

Background: On 8 September 1629, a Spanish fleet attacked the Anglo-French settlements on the island of Saint Kitts. On 18 September, the Spanish seized it and deported 120 French and 600 English. The Frenchman Giron landed sometime later at Saint-Christophe in L'Anse-aux-Papillons and found Englishmen, who had taken refuge in the woods during the Spanish attack to avoid combat, and who had subsequently taken the place and property of the French settlers who were taken prisoners.

Military Leaders in Command ●*French*: Captain Giron.

Military Forces involved: ●200 to 300 men.

Strategy or tactics : Bombardment and boarding attack.

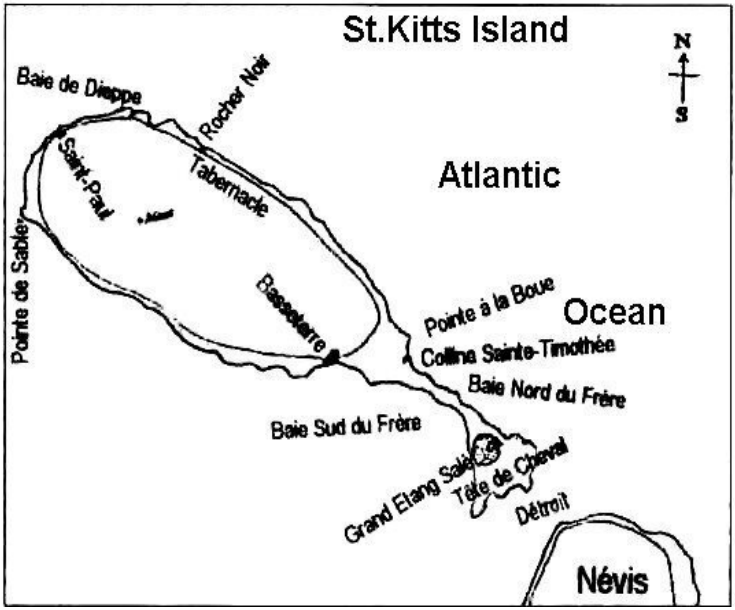
Summary of the action: The English refused to return to Giron the lands of the French, the latter attacked three of their ships, took two of them on boarding, swearing that if the third fired a single cannon shot, they would sink it.

Casualties & Losses ●The English lost three ships. The loss of life is unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: Thus, Giron was able to send back 350 French colonists to their homes.

Sources & Reading: ●History of the West Indies-Guyana through images. From Saint-Christophe to Matinino, Mario Mattioni, Désormaux, Fort-de-France, 1986. ●Histoire des Antilles et des colonies françaises, espagnoles, anglaises, danoises et suédoises, Paris, 1849. ●Histoire des Antilles françaises, XVlI-XXe siècle, Paul Burel, Perrin, Paris, 2002. ●«Histoire des Antilles », Jacques Adélaïde-Merlande, in La grande encyclopédie de la Caraïbe, Sanoli, 1990. ●The French Invasions of

St. Kitts-Nevis, Sir Thomas Réginald Saint-Johnston, K.C.M.G., Leeward Islands Government Printing Office, Antigua, 1931. ●History Heritage of St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla, Kathleen D. Manchester, Port of Spain, 1971.



Naval battle of Tadoussac.

Date of action: 25 July 1629.

Location: St. Lawrence Estuary, Canada. The battle took place quite far from Tadoussac, in the direction of Quebec, off the coast of La Malbaie, a town that did not yet exist.

Conflict: Thirty Years War [1618-1648]. France and England were at peace.

Context: At the time of the surrender of Québec, and thus of this naval battle, France and England were at peace, but the news had not yet reached America. Quebec, without a garrison, had just fallen into the hands of the French Huguenots who were fighting on behalf of England. Samuel de Champlain then asked the Kirke and Jacques Michel for permission to leave Quebec to return to Europe. He was a prisoner aboard the ship in the company of two young Amerindian girls named Espérance and Charité whom he wanted to take to France[18].

Military Leaders in command ●French: Emery, nephew of Samuel de Champlain. ●Anglo-Huguenot: Thomas Kirke, vice-general for England[19].

Military Forces involved ●An English-flagged Hugue-not war-ship against a French trading ship. The ship was accompanied by two pataches .

Strategy or tactics: With the pro-English Huguenots in a bad position after the boarding, Kirke used the good offices and

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[18] ●The holy man undoubtedly wanted to continue practicing these two theological virtues in his mother-country. But to his great regret, David Kirke, influenced by the chaste virtue (or jealousy) of another Huguenot named Nicolas Marsolet, made him leave the two girls in Canada.

[19] ●The Kirke (or Kirque) were French Huguenots (Protestants). Their mother was French and their father Scottish, who had immigrated to France. They had subsequently converted to Calvinism and had chosen to fight on behalf of England, which supported the French Protestants, just as the French supported the Scottish and Irish Catholics.

authority of Champlain, his prisoner, to get his nephew to surrender unduly.

Summary of the action: On July 24, the Huguenot ship that was taking Samuel de Champlain captive set sail. On the 25th, the lookout spotted a French merchant ship following the north shore of the St. Lawrence. This ship belonged to le Sieur de Caen and was commanded by Emery, the latter's cousin. Lépinay was his lieutenant. The Frenchman was going to Quebec to take delivery of beaver pelts and, generally speaking, to trade. Thomas Kirke ordered Emery's boat to be approached to greet him with a few broadsides3 which were immediately returned. About thirty shots in all with no notable results. A ball carried the head of a Huguenot. Emery sent a few rounds to discourage Kirke and continue his way, but the latter wanted to come to blows. 3-To shoot some balls at him in passing-

Seeing the fight coming, Kirke's Huguenots made Champlain climb onto the tillac, the highest bridge on the ship, Kirke ordered the boarding board to be nailed down and put his Huguenots in battle for the boarding. The Canadian "catholics' had done the same. Kirke, who sailed under the English flag although he was French born in Dieppe, rather badly boarded the French ship between the bowsprit and the mizzenmast (the foremast). As soon as he boarded, cannonballs and large stones began to rain down, as well as everything that fell into the hands of the combatants, because none of the crews could pass on board the enemy ship except through the bowsprit of Kirke's ship, because his ship had boarded her head-on. Champlain was 55 years old in this year 1629.

A limb of the Kirke's anchor had become caught in the French ship's ribs and it was impossible to break this death grip to make a satisfactory re-boarding. In this case, one well-armed and determined man could easily prevent the assault. As, after a while of fighting, it appeared that the Huguenot sailors were in a bad way, some of the crew took refuge in the back of the ship and Kirke had to rush to them to bring them back to the

fight with the flat of his sword. Then he had Champlain extracted from the steerage where he had been finally locked up, so that he could go and order Emery's crew to surrender.

Did he use the threat of death? In any case, Cham-plain accepted Kirke's request out of weakness, and Emery de Caen made his victorious crew lay down their arms. The two Huguenot pataches, also under the English flag, immediately intervened to help untangle the sails of the two ships.

As a result of this French defeat, the French ship was taken. It was on the occasion of this first occupation of Quebec, the capital of New France, by the "English" [since it was in the name of England and under the British flag that the Kirke, the French Huguenots, had taken Quebec] that the first African slave entered Canada. The Kirke brought with them a slave whom they sold to Olivier Le Baillif, who in turn sold him to Guillaume Couillard[20].

Sources & Readings ●Champlain, sa vie et son caractère, par Henri Raymond Casgram, Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques, 1980. ●Samuel de Champlain de Brouage, fondateur de Québec, 1567-1635, par Louis Audiat, Z. Montreuil Libraire, Saintes [France], 1893. ●Documents inédits sur Samuel de Champlain, fondateur de Québec, publiés par Etienne Charavay, Paris ; J. CharavayAiné, Paris, 1875. ●Samuel de Champlain, 1570-1635, hommage au fondateur de Québec [textes choisis de Samuel de Champlain, par Emile Ducharlet, Société littéraire des P.T.T. [Section Essonne], Evry, France, 1990. ●Pioneers of France in the New World, by Francis Parkman. « The first part of Pioneers of France in the New World deals with the attempts of the Spanish and the French Huguenots to occupy Florida; the second, with the expeditions of Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain and French colonial endeavors in Canada and Acadia. Pioneers is a stirring story, capturing the era of the earliest explorations in North

[20] ●This young man was called Olivier Le Jeune.

America.» 1874. ●Œuvres de Champlain, publiées sous le patronage de l'Université Laval par C.-H. Laverdière, pat Samuel de Champlain, 1567-1635, Québec, 1870. ●Champlain, the Founder of New France... Edwin Asa Dix, Publication D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1903. ●Le Journal de Québec et le Tombeau de Champlain, Stanislas Drapeau, Québec, 1867.

Naval battle of Mount's Bay.

Date of the action: 13 August 1666.

Location: Mount's Bay, at the southwestern tip of England. Geographical coordinates: 50°03' North latitude and 05°25' West longitude. The name of the bay comes from the islet of Mont Saint-Michel on which stands a romantic fortress, built as a Benedictine priory by French monks from the French Mont Saint-Michel in French Normandy.

Conflict: Second Anglo-Dutch War [1665-1667]. France and Denmark helped Holland to victory. Colonial hostilities with England in Europe, North America and the West Indies.

Background: On 13 August 1666, the two Saint-Malo frigates Le NOTRE-DAME-DU-MONT-CARMEL and Le SAINT-LAZARE, commanded by Louis de La Barre d'Arbouville de Groslieu, attacked six English ships in the bay.

Military leaders in command ●The commander of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel[21]: Louis de La Barre d'Arbouville de Groslieu.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: two French frigates including OUR LADY OF MOUNT-CARMEL ●*Royal Navy*: six English "units", without specifying types, probably frigates and smaller; before the intervention of three large frigates on the len-tomorrow.

Strategy or tactics: Gunfire and boarding.

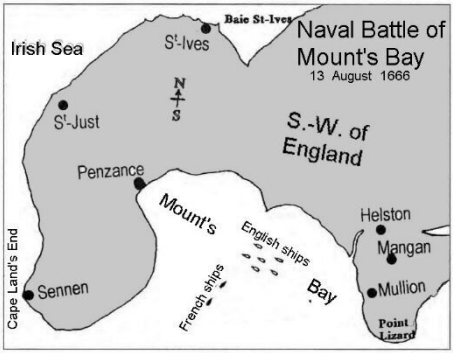
Summary of the action: The battle was extremely fierce: gunfire, fusillades, terrible boardings, hand-to-hand combat. At the end, four English ships were taken and two destroyed. But the next day, the NOTRE-DAME-DU-MONT-CARMEL was itself surprised by three large frigates[22] reinforced the following

[21] ●Groslieu had named a frigate after the Order of Chivalry of which he was a member.

[22] ●Including Leonard Guy's The PARADOX and The OXFORD.

day by two others. The NOTRE-DAME-DU-MONT-CARMEL resisted day and night, repelled twice the attack of Léonard Guy's PARADOX, the OXFORD and their preserves; and with only 17 survivors around him, covered with wounds, the reckless Groslieu died with his arms in his hands, facing the English. The battle lasted 24 hours without interruption.

The result of this fighting was a victory and a defeat for everyone. Groslieu was killed as well as all his men. It was the day before the feast of Notre-Dame[23], 14 August 1666.



Sources & Readings ●Holland and the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century. The politics of par-ticularism J.L. Price, Clarendon, Oxford, 1994. ●The soldier's guide: being an essay offer'd to all of that pro-fession. Authoris'd by many late examples, especially in the late wars between France and Holland; containing divers observations upon several remarkable accidents, which happened in those wars, printed for Bery, Tooke and Ja. Tonson, London, 1686. ●The Victory over the Fleet of the States General, obtained by his Majesties Navy Royal in the late engagement, begun the 25 of July in-stant [1666]; as it came from his Highness Prince Rupert, and his Grace the Duke of Albermarle, Prince Rupert: Son of Frederick I., King of Bohemia, London, 1666. ●British Battles on land and sea, James Grant, 4 vols, London, 1884,

[23] ●Groslieu most likely wanted to celebrate the religious feast of Notre-Dame, which corresponded to that of his Order of Chivalry, with a feat. He probably died happy to offer his life in honour of his Patron Saint. Christianity had not softened all morals!... especially not at that time of religious wars.

Naval Battle of Les Saintes.

Date of action: August 15th, 1666.

Location: West Indies archipelago located 10 km south of Guadeloupe and 20 km west of Marie-Galante. Average geographical coordinates of the archipelago: 15° 86' north latitude and 61° 61' west longitude.

Conflict: Second Anglo-Dutch War [1665–1667]. France and Denmark helped Holland to victory. Colonial rivalries with England, in Europe as in the West Indies.

Background: Hostilities with England had resumed. In retaliation for their eviction from Sain t-Christophe and their failure before Martinique, the English attacked Les Saintes. Lord Willoughby, Governor-General of the English Isles resided in Barbados. Furious that the English had been driven out of St. Kitts, he resolved to attack Guadeloupe.

Military leaders in command ●*English*: Lord Francis Willoughby. ●*French*: captains Baron and Reauville. Dulion[24] who participated in the last fighting, will become a little later governor of Guadeloupe[25].

Military Forces involved ●*English*: from the fleet of Willoughby[26] detached five ships which sailed to Les Saintes. A Scottish captain from Willoughby wrote that Lord Willoughby had 2800 marines in his squadron and that he had fetched 2000 men from Antigua, 1100 from Nevis, and 300 or 400 from Montserrat. He therefore commanded at least 6,600 infantry. ●*French*: unknown.

Strategy or tactics : The fight was for the possession of these rocks called Les Saintes and then considered the "Gibraltar of

[24] ●Or *The Lion.*
[25] ●Having registered on his account many other feats of arms, he died in 1677
[26] ●Eighteen large ships, among others, and thousands of men.

the West Indies". Empty assaults against the French positions and counter-attacks of the latter. A hurricane joined the French to totally destroy the English expedition.

Summary of the action: After his failure before Saint-Pierre of Martinique, Francis Willoughby[27], anxious to restore his tarnished image, arrived at Les Saintes on August 2nd. In the harbor were anchored the frigates of captains Baron and Reauville.

Attacked by Vice-Admiral William Hill's three frigates, these two captains fought a long battle. One was taken prisoner, the other, Baron, seeing that he was about to succumb, burned his ship to prevent it from falling into the hands of the English and entrenched himself in a "fort of rocks" against which the only English crew of The MARGARET[28] lost 60 men without success and uselessly.

Around 18:00, a violent north wind arose, which soon became a storm. The English squadron was cruising in the 5 km strait between La Guadeloupe and Les Saintes when it was assaulted by this terrible hurricane. The winds blew from the north for six hours, and then, after fifteen minutes of hesitation, suddenly turned to the E.S.E. and pushed the whole squadron to the rocky coast of Guadeloupe where the ships were ripped open and the sailors were lost. The few ships that were in the port of Les Saintes were themselves damaged. Only one small frigate of 22 guns was rescued and reached port. The storm lasted for hours. The ships anchored in the harbor of Terre-de-Haut flee drossed to the coast like all those of the English fleet whose wrecks were found even on the shores of Guadeloupe.

As for Vice-Admiral Hill's 450 English sailors who remained ashore, they were re-attacked by Dulion and his militiamen from Guadeloupe as well as by the terrible Carib Indians from Dominica who came to support the French, under the ordres of Desmeuriers. Dulion landed at Les Saintes on 15th

[27] ●With 18 of his ships.
[28] ●Capitaine Edward Burd.

August and forced the English to surrender. They finally capitulated on August 16th, 1666.

Lord Francis Willoughby's nephew, Henry, arrived from Antigua to the aid of Hill's troops with six ships. D'Elbée attacked them with Le LYS-COURONNÉ 40, Le SAINT-CHRISTOPHE, Le CONCORDE and Le SAINT-ANTOINE, with crews reinforced by 400 militiamen. Finally, after a fierce battle on boarding, the Français seized 230 men out of 300 and three ships out of six.

Casualties & Losses ●According to French sources, the English lost Admiral Lord Francis Willoughby, 8,000 men and 17 ships, if we take into account the losses inflicted by the hurricane. This seems a bit of an exaggeration if we consider the number of people in the field at the beginning. But it is true that *the crews were not counted*. Only a small flute of 22 guns managed to save itself from the turmoil. It was a dismasted flute that finally reached Montserrat while the Milord's fireship reached Antigua.

Consequence of this English defeat: To celebrate this victory over the English, Dulion asked the Jacobins fathers to sing a Te Deum. This is the first "15 August" in the history of Les Saintes, because this date became the day of the patronal feast of Terre-de-Haut. The misfortune of some inspires happiness in others.

Sources & Readings ●Histoire de la Guadeloupe, etc., Denis BLANCHE, Paris, 1938. ● Histoire de la Guadeloupe sous l'ancien régime, 1635-1789, Maurice Satineau, Paris, 1928. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, in Six Volumes, vol. V. Sampson Low, Marston & Co. 1900, London. ●Les Saintes, dependencies of Guadeloupe. Recueil de notes et observations générales, Félix Breta, Paris, 1939. ●The Caribbean. Guadeloupe, 1635-1656. Histoire des vingt premiers années de la colonisation de la Guadeloupe, d'après les relations du R. P. Breton,

Publié par l'abbé Joseph Rennard, par Raymond Breton, dominicain, Paris, 1929.

Naval battle of Cape Dungeness.

Date of the action: end of September 18th, 1666.

Location: Off Cape Dungeness, located in England. Geographical coordinates: 50°55' North latitude and 00°58' East longitude.

Conflict: Second Anglo-Dutch War [1665-1667]. France and Denmark helped Holland son this brief war. victory during this brief war. Colonial hostilities with England, both in Europe and in the West Indies.

Military Leaders involved ●*English*: admiral Sir Thomas Allin. ●*French*: Captain Louis de La Roche-Saint-André [Le RUBIS 50 guns] ;Captain Rabesnières-Treil1ebois [Le BOURBON].

Military Forces involved ●*English*: 25 vessels. ●*French*: 14 French-Dutch vessels.

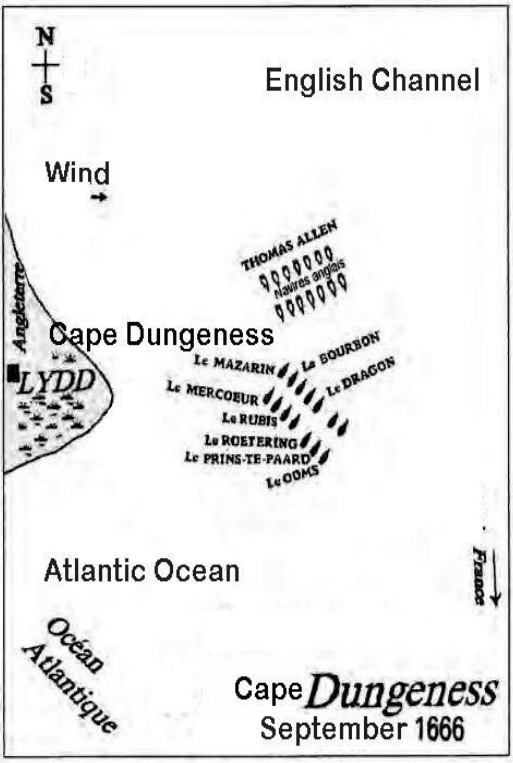
Strategy or tactics: Gun battle. The English, more numerous, had the possibility of encircling the French or attacking them in pincer, from both sides.

Summary of the action: The rearguard of the French fleet was composed of 14 ships, including the small Dutch division that followed from Toulon. In heavy weather, this squadron came to head on a strong English squadron at Cape Dungeness. The English admiral, Thomas Allin, attacked them. Le BOURBON [Rabesnières-Treillebois] and the MAZARIN [Villepars], after a violent fight against six English ships[29] 1 , succeeded, in poor condition, in disengaging, to give the English the slip and to return to Le Havre. They were joined there by Le MERCŒUR [Thurelle] and The PRINS-TE-PAARD[30] 2: whose two fellow Battleships, The OOMS and The ROETERING, had to throw

[29] ●Against which Rabesnières fired more than 1100 rounds at double charge.
[30] ●From the Dutch "Vèrburg".

themselves on the coast. Surrounded by 3 English ships, Le DRAGON [Preaux-Mercey] had dismasted two of them and then managed to stall to reach Dieppe.

Le TRIOMPHE also did well. The English captured only Le RUBIS[31]. The latter held out for 7 hours against 9 English ships and shot down many enemy sailors, including about 40 of Captain Digby's crew alone. Having, himself, 116 men out of combat, his captain, Count Louis de La Roche- Saint-André, ended up surrendering to spare the survivors from the final massacre.



Casualties & Losses ●Important on both sides.

Consequence of this Franco-Dutch defeat: This fine conduct earned the Count of La Roche-Saint-André his immediate release and repatriation by the King of England; from the Duke of York, a sword, and from Louis XIV, who did not want to be outdone, the collar of Orders with the command of a squadron,

[31] ●A small 50-gun ship.

on August 27, 1667. The other French prisoners were also pampered in England by the jerseyed Carteret[32], who became Commissioner General of the Royal Navy.

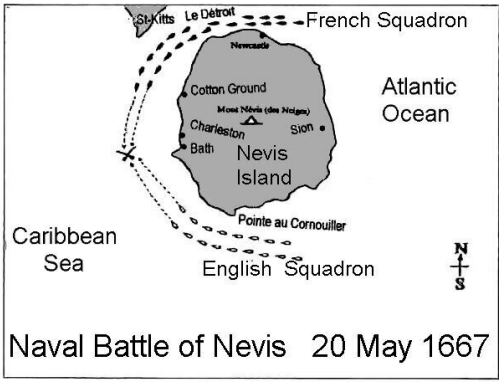
Sources & Readings ●Ordinance stating that the King [of France] has resolved to help the United Provinces against England, and consequently revoking all passports and safe-conducts, Louis XIV, King of France, Les Imprimeurs et Li-braires ordinaires du Roy, Paris, 1666. [Royal Act. 1666-01-26, Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the War with England (1665-1667) and the War of Flanders or Devolution (1667-1668)], ● Cromwell's Navy. The Fleet and the English Revolution. 1648-1660, Bernard Capp, Clarendon, Oxford, 1989. ●The Royal Victory obtained [...] against the Dutch Fleet, June the 2nd and 3rd 1665, etc. [song], Coles, London, 1665. ●The Evolution of the Sailing Navy 1509-1815, Richard Harding, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1995. ●The Royal Navy, A History From the Earliest Times to the Present, by William Laird Clowes, 7 Vol. Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1899.

[32] ●Jerseyan according to Encyclopedia Britannica, Sir George Carteret, born about 1610 in the Isle of Jersey, according to the l'Encyclopedia Britannica], a Norman archipelago owned outright by the King of England. He became a colonial owner of New Jersey. In fact, today a town of 20,000 people in Middlesex County, in the northeastern U.S. state of New Jersey, is named after him. Sir George became an officer in the Royal Navy and then Lieutenant Governor of Jersey. He transformed the island into a royalist stronghold during the English Civil War. He supported the Stuarts and was made a knight and then a baronet. After the capture of the island, in 1651, by the Parliamentarians [Round Heads], he took refuge in France then returned to England at the Restoration (1660) to become a powerful politician. In 1667, he gave up his position as *Commissioner General of the Royal* Navy when Parliament accused him of laxity in managing the naval budget. In 1664, he was granted half of New Jersey.

Naval battle of Névis Island.

Date of the action: 20 May 1667.

Location: island in the West Indies located 5 km south-east of the island of Saint-Christophe. Geographical coordinates: 17º 10' north latitude and 62º 34' west longitude. It was named, according to some, after the culmi-nant point of Scotland [Ben Nevis in Celtic, 1,343 m, 56º 48' N latitude and 04º 59' W] situated on the edge of Loch Lochy, a continuation of Loch Ness, The mount is bypassed by the small river Nevis. According to other more serious sources, the name derives from Christopher Columbus' description of the mountain of Nevis crowned with white snow-like clouds [las nieves, in Spanish], in 1643, when he discovered the island. The name Nieves was given to the mountain, Mount Nevis, 985 m, and later to the island itself.



Conflict; Second Anglo-Dutch War [1665-1667]- France and Denmark helped Holland to victory. French-English colonial rivalries. This war was ended by the Treaty of Breda [1667]. French War of Devolution against Spain [1667-1668][33]. This

[33] ●In matters of succession, devolution is the transmission by inheritance of one's own property from the paternal line to the maternal line or *vice versa.* It was also a right which, in some countries, gave the succession to a daughter of a first marriage in preference to a son born of a second marriage.

war was undertaken by Louis XIV after the death of Philip IV of Spain.

MARINE ROYALE 20 May 1667
1-Le LYS-COURONNÉ 38 2-La JUSTICE 32 3-La CONCORDE 4-Le FLORISSANT 30, 5-Les ARMES-D'ANGLETERRE 24, 6-Le SAINT-CHRISTOHE 26, 7-L'HARMONIE 32, 8-La NOTRE-DAME 10+12pierriers 9-Le MARSOUIN, flute 18, 10-Le CHER-AMI, brûlot, 11-Le ZÉLANDIA 32, 12-2 vaisseaux (noms inconnus)

Louis XIV claimed the Netherlands on behalf of his wife Maria Theresa. Without waiting for the end of the negotiations[34] between France and the new King of Spain, Charles II, born of the second marriage of Philip IV, Louis XIV invaded Flanders. The campaign was conducted rapidly. The great cities of Flanders fell into the hands of Tu renne and Condé conquered in fifteen days the Franche-Comté which belonged to Spain. Frightened by the speed of these victories, Holland hastened to conclude with Sweden and England[35] of Charles II Stuart[36] the

[34] ●These negotiations concerned the dowry of Marie Thérèse. The latter had renounced part of the Spanish inheritance on condition that her dowry be paid; but this dowry [considerable, one can imagine] remained unpaid. The renunciation therefore lapsed. This was a *casu belli* and an opportunity for the French to block the Habsburg hinge and prevent that dynasty from reconstituting the Empire of Charles V, which had previously encircled and suffocated France. The royal bribes of the French kept King Charles II of England out of the Triple Alliance for a time, but his public opinion forced him into action against the French,

[35] ●With whom she had been at war until then.

[36] ●Charles Stuart, born in London in 1630, held the crowns of England, Scotland, Ireland [from 1660] and, since the Hundred Years' War, the crown of France, which the English did not relinquish until the signing of the Peace of Amiens [1802], Charles II of England was the son of Charles I and Henriette de France. Recalled to the throne by General Monk in 1660, he offended English patriotism by allowing himself to be bought by French bribes [from 1664 to 1667] in order to ally himself against Holland and, above all, by practicing tolerance towards Catholics. He also had to face the opposition

Triple Alliance. Faced with this danger of an anti-French coalition, Louis XIV had to stop the march of his armies. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle[37] gave Flanders to France. This war was called the War of Devolution because it was undertaken to enforce the right that a part of the succession of Philip IV, of Burgundian origin, should devolve to Maria Theresa, the daughter of his first marriage.

Background: On 31 July 1667 the *Treaty of Breda*[38] was signed between France, England, the Dutch Republic and Denmark. It ended the *Second Anglo-Dutch War* [1665-1667] between the English on the one hand and the Dutch on the other [aided by the French and the Danes]. The defeated English were obliged not to apply the *Act of Navigation*[39] to the Netherlands; or at least the latter could use Dutch ships to transport goods from the Rhine to England. On the other hand, defeated England was denied a share in the lucrative spice trade it claimed.

In return, England kept New Holland[40] and some African posts taken from the Dutch. It also regained Monserrat, Antigua and Saint Kitts [taken by the French]. Holland, for its part, retained Surinam and, in the East, Poulo Run. France kept French Guiana and recovered Tadia.

Military leaders in command ●*Marine Royale* and *Dutch Navy*: Antoine Lefebvre de La Barre and Abraham Crynssen or Crijnssen. ●*Royal Navy*: Captain John Berry.

Military Forces involved French and Dutch frigates against English man-of-war. ●*Royal Navy*: 17 English armed vessels, including a dozen warships. In March, Captain John Berry, in a

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of the Parliament of London, hostile to the Catholics and to his brother [the future James II], against whom the Parliament tried to impose the Exclusion Bill [in 1681], which led to the dissolution of the Assembly.

[37] ●In 1668; not to be confused with the other Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle which ended the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748.

[38] ●Town in North Brabant where the treaty was signed.

[39] ●The Navigation Act was passed under Cromwell's Protectorate in 1651. It enacted a protectionist and even prohibitive regime in favour of the English merchant marine.

[40] ●Current regions of New York and New Jersey.

hired 56-gun man-of-war [The CORONATION] arrived at Barbados. The Governor decided to make an attempt to save Nevis. He bought up a number of merchantmen to create a squadron of ten big men-of-war and a fireship; the squadron under John Berry's command. ●*Marine Royale*: West India Company's French squadron had 19 small merchant ships reinforced with 1,200 volunteers; it was split into two divisions. Léon Guérin specifies that the French squadron consisted of 17 ships (small) and two fireships.

Strategy or tactics: The initial surprise having fizzled out, the battle was fought with cannon against the numerically inferior first French division; but the English fled as soon as the second division intervened to restore numerical equality, Strategically speaking, this victory opened the way for the French to the English West Indies.

Summary of the action: The two French divisions penetrated, in two columns, into the bay of Nevis to surprise the English fleet[41]. The English fleet, on guard, had much larger caliber artillery, The EAST-INDIA, The JOHN-THOMAS, The QUAKERS of 40 to 42 guns. In all, 17 ships[42] were overflowing from the west-southwest tip of Nevis Island as soon as the two French columns appeared at dawn on 20 May. La Barre broke through the English line to cut it in two. The JUSTICE and SAINT-CHRISTOPHE were content to cannonade. Le LYS COURONNÉ was isolated, as Le FLORISSANT and Les ARMES-D'ANGLETERRE could not catch the wind to follow her; as for the l'ar-rearguard, it was immobilised by the accident of the CONCORDE where a fire pot had burst and set the ship on fire. The French flagship Le LYS COURONNÉ [38 guns] was fighting against 6 English ships of 48 to 52 guns. When the French 2nd Division, which included Abraham Crynssen's[43].

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[41] ●According to a special order of Louis XIV to attack Nevis.

[42] ●Including 10 warships.

[43] Abraham Crijnssen (died 1 February 1669) was a Dutch naval commander, notable for capturing the English colony in Suriname in 1667 during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, resulting in the establishment of a long-term colony under Dutch control.

Dutch ships, came to the rescue under full sail, the English broke off the fight to avoid boarding and took shelter under the protection of the forts of Nevis Island (where they were also protected by two fireships). One of these fireships prevented the Dutch Abraham Crynssen from boarding the English admiral.

Casualties & Losses ●The English lost 144 killed and 28 wounded, including the crew of a ship [about 100 men] which had jumped. The English lost one man-of-war. According to Guérin[44] (p.439), the English lost in this battle between seven and eight hundred men. ●The French totaled about 30 wounded and killed and the Dutch the same.

Consequence of this English defeat: If the abandonment of the battlefield is the recognition of defeat, it was the French and the Dutch who were the victors. But as the island remained British after the battle, some Englishmen consider it a British victory. This victory allowed them to attack the English colonies in the West Indies without worrying too much about the Royal Navy. blown up allegedly by accident[45].

Sources & Readings ●*Histoire maritime de France contenant L'Histoire des Provinces et villes maritimes des combats de mer, depuis la fondation de Marseille, 600 ans avant J.-C., de la Flibuste, des Navigations, Voyages autour du monde, Naufrages célèbres, découvertes, Colonisations, de la Marine en général, avant, pendant et depuis le règne de Louis XIV jusqu'à l'année 1850*, par Léon Guérin, Dufour et Mulat éditeurs, Paris, 1851. p.181ff. ●*Acts of Assembly*, Passed in the island of Nevis, from 1664, to 1739, Inclu-sive, London, 1740. ●*Nevis Queen of the Caribbean*, by Deborah Lellouch, BTR Paris, 1994. ●*The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, James Rees Jones, Longman, London. ●Prince Rupert. Admiral and General-at-Sea, Frank Kitson, Constable, London, 1998. ●The Anglo-Dutch Naval Wars, 1652-1674, Roger Hainsworth & Christine Churches, Sutton, Stroud [UK], 1998.

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[44] *Histoire maritime de la France*, de Léon Guérin.
[45] ●Clowes, vol.II, p.432. In a fierce battle, everything is 'accidental'.

Naval Battle of Martinique.

Autre nom: Battle of St. Pierre.

Date of action: 29 June - 7 July 1667.

Location: Off the city of Saint-Pierre, Martinique. Geographic coordinates: 14°74' N. & 61°176' W. Saint-Pierre is the city which was destroyed in 1902 by the eruption of the volcano Montagne Pelée; 25,000 died, the whole population except for one inmate who was then in the dungeon of the civil prison, deep under the surface, 235 years later. Who will say that crime does not pay?

Conflict: Second Anglo-Dutch War [1665–1667]. France and Denmark helped Holland to victory[46]. Anglo-French colonial rivalries. *War of Devolution* [1667- 1668].

Background: This war [of devolution] was undertaken by Louis XIV on the death of Philip IV of Spain. Louis XIV claimed the Netherlands on behalf of his wife Maria Theresa. Without waiting for the end of negotiations between France and the new King of Spain, Charles II, born of the second marriage of Philip IV, Louis XIV invaded Flanders. The campaign was quickly conducted. The great cities fell into the hands of Turenne and Condé conquered in fifteen days Franche-Comté which, until then, belonged to Spain. Frightened by the rapidity of these victories, Holland hastened to conclude with Sweden and England[47] the *Triple Alliance*, and faced with this danger of coalition, Louis XIV had to stop the march of his armies. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle[48] gave Flanders to the France. This war was called the War of Devolution because it was undertaken to

[46] ●Which ended with the Peace Treaty of Breda on July 31, 1667.
[47] ●With whom she was at war until then.
[48] ●In 1668; not to be confused with the other Peace of Aachen which ended the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748.

assert the right that a part, of Burgundian origin[49], of the succession of Philip IV was to devolve to Maria Theresa, daughter of his first marriage.

Bataille de Saint-Pierre de la Martinique	
Royal Navy	**French Squadron**
1-LION 58, flagship, r/ad. John Harman 2-JERSEY 50, 3-CROWN 48, 4-NEWCASTLE 50, 5-DOVER 46, 6-BONAVENTURE 48, 7-ASSISTANCE 46, 8-ASSURANCE 38, 9-NORWICH 26, frigate 10-JOSEPH fireship 11-PROSPEROUS fireship 12-PORTSMOUTH 10, ketch 13-ROE 8, ketch	A column of 25 civilian merchant ships which was **un**accompanied by any naval vessels, anchored in the Bay of Saint-Pierre, led by Le Fèvre de La Barre..

Lefebvre de La Barre was waiting for reinforcements in Martinique. But nothing happened and only merchant ships of the East India Company remained at La Barre. Commodore John Harman learned these details from a flibustier and arrived at once with nine ships, a caiche and a fire.

Military Leaders ●Royal Navy: Commodore John Harman. ●Compagnie des Indes Orientales [la CIO. française] : Joseph Antoine Le Fèvre de La Barre; Héliot Saint-Germain ; Robert de Clodoré...

Military Forces involved ●Royal Navy : neuf vaisseaux de guerre, un caiche[50] et un brûlot. ●French C.I.O.: 19 marchands et 14 barques.

Strategy or tactics ● The C.I.O. merchant ships, though armed, could not compete with warships in terms of power, either in number of guns or in calibre; so much so that *the English*

[49] ●This was also the reason why Louis XIV seized the Franche-Comté (Burgundy).
[50] ●Caiche : n.m. small ship with a bridge, mast like a yacht.

bombarded the French with long-range guns but the French merchant ships could not reach their the English.

Summary of the action: On 29 June 1667, 19 French merchant ships and 14 barques were lined up along the coast. When the English fleet appeared, 300 civilians embarked to reinforce the French crews. Clodoré was stationed at the Saint-Sébastien battery and Héliot Saint-Germain, at the Saint-Robert battery at the end of the anchorage. Everywhere, trenches provided cover for the French soldiers from the dense English broadsides. Despite the superiority of his warships[51] , John Harman did not dare to attempt a landing. The strongest of the French merchant ships Le LYS-COURONNÉ, had only 38 guns. Three times, on the 29th June, the2nd and the 4th of July, the English squadron came within range of the French batteries of the transport-ships. The bombardment began to dangerously deplete the stocks of projectiles in the holds of the vessels of the Compagnie des Indes Orientales françaises, and La Barre had to be sparing with his blows.

The English, in their warships, had sou Chefs presents ●*Royal Navy*: Commodore John Harman. ●Compagnie Française des Indes Orientales [the *French CIO*.]: Héliot Saint-Germain; Clodoré...

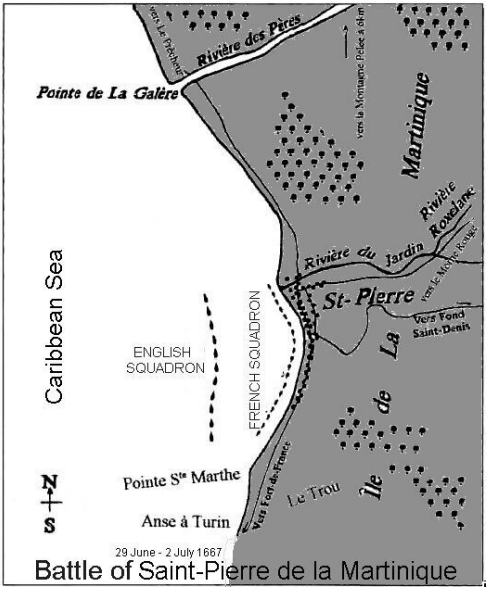
Military Forces involved ●Royal Navy: nine large warships, a caiche[52] and a fireship. ●French C.I.O.: 19 merchants and 14 boats.

Strategy or tactics ●The merchant ships of the I.O.C., although armed, could not compete in power with the warships, neither in number of guns nor in power of caliber; so much so that the English bombarded the French with long-range guns which did not allow the French merchant ships to reach their enemies.

[51] ●6 ships of 68 guns, 54 et 48, The LION, The ESPERANCE, The CROWN, The DOVER.
[52] ●*Dictionnaire Littré*: une caiche, small one-deck ship.

However it was a 4-day battle: despite their artillery superiority, the English took four day to win the battle against civil ships.

Summary of the action: On June 29, 1667, 19 French merchant transports and 14 boats were stowed along the coast. When the English fleet appeared, 300 civilians embarked to reinforce the French crews. Clodoré was stationed at the Saint-Sébastien and Héliot Saint-Germain batteries, at the Saint-Robert battery at the end of the anchorage. Everywhere, trenches put the French soldiers under cover of the dense English borders. Despite the superiority of his warships, John Harman did not dare to attempt a landing. The strongest of the French merchant ships [Le LYS COURONNÉ] had only 38 guns.



Battle of Saint-Pierre de la Martinique

Three times, on 29th June, 2nd and 4th of July, the English squadron paraded within range of the French batteries of the transport vessels. The bombardment began to dangerously lower the level of stocks of cannonballs in the bunkers of the transports of the French East India Company and La Barre had to spare the blows. The English, in their warships, possessed almost inexhaustible balls and powder magazines.

On 6 July, Harman launched a decisive attack on French transport. An English firebrand set fire to Le LYS

COURONNÉ, causing panic among its civilian crew who took refuge on land instead of fighting the fire[53].

The sailors of Le SAINT-JEAN did the same. The fire spread to Le MERCIER and to Le LION-D'OR where the cargoes, which had not been landed for lack of time, were worth fortunes. The whole line of transport would have burned without the energy of Captain Lajaunaye. Finally, in order to prevent all these rich cargoes from falling into the hands of the English, La Bar ordered them to be scuttled as soon as their use as cannonballs were exhausted.

The 19 French high-board ships and 14 boats were backed by the city of Saint-Pierre. The long-range guns of the LION 68, the CROWN 54 and the ESPERANCE 48, crushed the small French group with their fire without the French being able to reach their opponents in its response. It was a disaster for the French. All the merchant ships were taken or burnt. The English suffered 80 casualties.

As a result of this French defeat, the French West India Company suffered heavy human and commercial losses.

Sources & Readings ●Fox, Frank L (2018). *The Four Days' Battle*: *The Greatest Sea Fight in the Age of Sail*. Seaforth Publishing.●Histoire de la Martinique, par Armand Nicolas, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1996. ●The slave in Guadeloupe and Martinique from XVII e to XIXe. René Belenus, Pointe-à-Pitre, Jasot, 1998. ● Political economic and social history of the. Martinique sous l'ancien régime (1655-1789), by C.A Banbuck, André Cabuzel, Fort-de-France, Société de distribution et de culture, 1972. ●Rickard, J (22 August 2009), Battle of Martinique, 25 June 1667. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867.

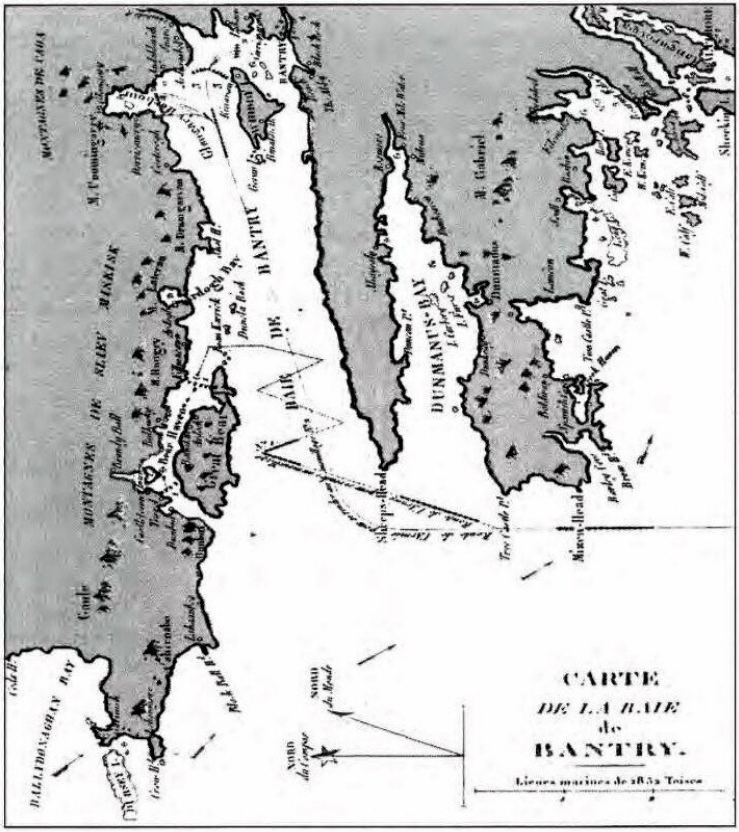
[53] ●Although less important than those of warships, the powder magazines of merchant ships also represented a great danger, since an explosion could volatilize the ship and the crew, which was also less disciplined than a military crew.

4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, in Six Volumes, vol. V. Sampson Low, Marston & Co. 1900, London.

Naval Battle of Bantry Bay.

Date of action: May 11, 1689.

Location: A fjord of glacial origin located at the south-western tip of Ireland. Geographic coordinates: latitude 51°38' N, longitude 09°48' West. A few kilometers west of Bantry Bay, not far



from the sea, is a tiny village with a name that is too long: Ballinascartby. At the end of the seventeenth century, extremely

poor sharecroppers were trying to survive on their Exhausting work in this small village as in all the others of this island. Their labour was barely enough to pay an exorbitant lease to the rich Anglo-Protestant landowner who had just been imposed on the region by William III (of Orange) of England. One of those poor people was called Ford. A descendant of this family would emigrate to America and produce Henry Ford and his Model T. America would prove to be a much more fertile ground for this oppressed people.

Conflict: Religious War of the League of Augsburg [1688–1697]. Civil War of Religion in England. War between England and Ireland.

Background: The revocation of the Edict of Nantes [1685] led to the formation of a coalition against the France of Louis XIV, "the League of Augsburg", which included several Protestant countries [Holland, the Holy Germanic Empire, Sweden] and Spain eager to avenge the disastrous Peace of the Pyrenees and Nijmegen. In England, a religious war was raging.

On 17 April, Herbert was in Cork, Ireland with his squadron. On 29 April, he discovered the French squadron off Kinsale. He did not dare to attack her, and the next day the French had disappeared. He found them in Bantry Bay, County Cork, dominated by the Berchaven Mountains. He stayed far enough away to watch them until morning and then approached after receiving reinforcements. On May 9, 1689, the French squadron at Châteaurenault had just sent 6000 men to help the deposed English sovereign. Although war had not yet been declared between the France and England, the English captain Ashby opened fire. The French retaliated immediately.

Military Leaders in command ●French: François Louis Rousselet, comte then marquis de Châteaurenault [1637-1716]. ●English: Vice-Admiral of England Arthur Herbert, plus tard comte de Torrington.

MARINE ROYALE		
NAME	**Position**	**Captain**
1●L'ENTREPRENANT (56)	Corps de bataille	De Beaujeu
2●L'ARDENT (66)	Corps de bataille	Châteaurenault
3●Le DUC (50)	Avant-garde	Saint-Mars
4●L'OISEAU (40)	Arrière-garde	Duquesne-Guiton
5●Le LÉGER (40)	Avant-garde	Forbin
6●Le FAUCON (40)	Corps de bataille	Hervault
7●L'ARROGANT (58)	Corps de bataille	La Harteloire
8●L'EXCELLENT (60)	Arrière-garde	La Vigerie-Treillebois
9●Le VERMANDOIS (60)	Avant-garde	Machault
10●L'APOLLON (56)	Arrière-garde	Montortié
11●Le NEPTUNE (46)	Arrière-garde	De Pallières
12●Le CAPABLE (48)	Corps de bataille	Bellefontaine
13●Le DIAMANT (54)	Corps de bataille	Coëtlogon
14●Le FURIEUX (60)	Corps de bataille	Desnos
15●Le COURAGEUX (56)	Arrière-garde	Job Forant
16●Le SANT-MICHEL (56)	Avant-garde	Gabaret
17●Le FRANÇOIS (48)	Avant-garde	Panetier
18●L'ARC-EN-CIEL (44)	Arrière-garde	Perrinet
19●Le FENDANT (52)	Avante-garde	De Réals
20●Le FORT (56)	Avant-garde	Rosmadec
21●L'EMPORTÉ 42)	Arrière-garde	Roussel
22●Le MODÉRÉ (50)	Corps de bataille	Sainte-Hermine
23●Le PRÉCIEUX (52)	Avant-garde	De Salempart
24●Le SAGE (52)	Arrière-garde	Vaudricourt
TOTAL **1242** CANONS		

Military Forces involved ●*English*: 27 ships, including 19 ships of the line. ●*French*: Châteaurenault had 24 ships; he landed 6000 men at Bantry.

Strategy or tactics: Bantry Bay is a kind of deep "fjord" oriented east-west and open to the west. The French squadron had for the first time bomb *ships* invented in 1681 by a Frenchman named Renaud, He built ketchs, sailrs with two masts, armed with bomb launchers. Five years later, the first English bomb launcher was built in Chatham.

ROYAL NAVY		
NAME		**Captain**
1●The DEFIANCE (64)		Ashby
2●ThePORTSMOUTH (46)		St Loe
3● The PLYMOUTH (60)		Carter
4●The RUBY (48)		Froud
5●The DIAMOND (48)		Walters
6●The ADVICE (48)		Granville
7●The MARY (62)		Aylmer
8●The SAINT ALBANS (50)		Layton
9●The EDGAR (64)		Shovell
10●The ELIZABETH (70)	Adm. Herbert	Mitchell
11●The PENDENNIS (70)		Churchill
12●The PORTLAND (50)		Aylmer
13●The DEPTFORD (54)		Rooke
14● The WOOLWICH (54)		Sanderson
15● The DARMOUTH (36)		Ley
16● The GREENWICH (54)		Billopp
17● The CAMBRIDGE (70)		Clements
18● The ANTELOPE (48)		Wickham
19● The YORK (60)		Delavall
20● The FRIEDRAKE	Bomb ship	Unknown
21● The SALAMANDER	Bomb ship	Unknown
22● The SOLDADO	fireship	Graydon
TOTAL **1056** canons		

Here is how Admiral Castex summed up the Bantry Bay maneuver: "Herbert with 19 ships approached and squinted to tighten the earth. Châteaurenaulr set sail on the morning of the 11th to meet him and engaged in the fight while staying near the coast to cover his transports... Herbert, unable to break the French, decided to retreat to Spithead. Châteaurenault did not pursue him at the time, preferring to continue escorting his convoy. He then tried, but he could not find the English and he returned to Brest on 1 8 May. Fortunately, everything had been accomplished. The French squadron and its convoy had been able to arrive on the coast of Ireland without finding the English squadron, and the battle of Bantry had turned into our favor[54].»

Summary of the action: At the approach of the English fleet, at dawn on May 1st, the French squadron, which was anchored,

[54] ●*Strategic Theories*, Admiral Raoul Castex, *Société d'édition géographique, maritime et coloniale,* Paris, 1929, chap, II.p. 155-

raised the anchor, dropped its sails to face the English and immediately put itself in line of battle: Gabaret in the vanguard, Châteaurenault in the center and Forant in the rearguard. The English did not move, the French let themselves be carried on their line and the ship that commanded the French vanguard hoisted the flame of combat. Captain Ashby opened fire; Châteaurenault immediately retaliated. His ship attacked DEFIANCE. Cannonade and musketry. The English flagship was The ELIZABETH. It bore the mark of Admiral Herbert.

After a long and violent fight that lasted a good part of the day [5 hours], the English admiral gave the order to retreat. The ELIZABETH and several other English ships had suffered extensive damage. Less than half of the British units were in a condition to resume combat. Casualties were average on both sides. The English squadron then retreated and disappeared behind the horizon leaving the French in full possession of Bantry's Bay.

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: 40 killed and 93 wounded. ●*English*: 94 killed, 300 wounded and two ships completely helpless.

Consequence of this English defeat: The English squadron went to Spithead[55] to repair its damage.

In fact, if the French claimed victory for having *remained masters of the battlefield*, William of Orange partially deprived them of the pleasure by refusing to play himself the vanquished, because in order not to lose face, the English admiral announced on his arrival at Portsmouth[56] that he had repulsed the French squadron.

That's it. To give more credibility to the victory, the House of Commons in London immediately voted thanks to Herbert. King William made a special trip to Portsmouth to dine with the admiral aboard the ELIZABETH. In addition, he granted letters

[55] ●Strait between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.
[56] ●And without any jousting with the agreement of the King of England.

of nobility to the three English chiefs: Herbert was named Earl of Torrington and peer of England. Ashby and Schovell were knighted. In Dublin, on the other hand, a Te Deum was sung in Irish Catholic churches to celebrate this English defeat.

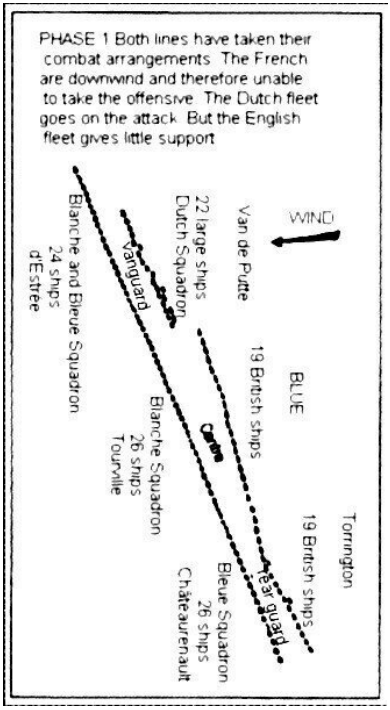
Everyone was, deep down, very satisfied with this battle. Except, of course, those who had suffered directly, the wounds and the families of the killed of the two nations[57].

Sources and Readings : ●Aubrey: *The Defeat of James Stuart's Armada 1692*, p. 35●The French Are in the Bay: the Expédition te Bantry Bay, 1796, Joseph A. Murphy, Mercier Press, Cork, Dublin, 1 997. ●L'Odyssée du vaisseau « Droits de l'Homme » et l'expédition d'Irlande de 1796, Jakez Cornou, Bruno Jonin. Dufa, Quimper, 1988. ●Wolfe Tone & the French Invasion of 1796. A Brief History of Events. Mkhael J. Carroll, Banrry Design Studios, Bantry, 1995. ●Bantry Bay Ireland in the Days of Napoléon and Wolfe Tone, P Brendan Bradley, Williams & Norgate, Bantry, 1931.

[57] ●However, Admiral Castex rather severely criticized Châteaurenault's prudent conduct: "The primary mission having been accomplished, the main objective, the enemy fleet, regained its rights. The French admiral could with 24 ships against 19 win a decisive victory. AT 17:00. however, he ceased fighting, although the enemy was already in bad shape, to approach Bantry and protect his convoy, which was at that time empty of troops and risked absolutely nothing. And as much as a momentary departure from the principles before the battle may be admitted, Châteaurenault's conduct must be condemned in subsequent circumstances, conduct which quite astonished eyewitnesses."

Naval battle of Beachy Head *or* Béveziers.

Other names: Battle of Beachy Head; Battle of Pevensy. The word Béveziers is a corruption of the word Pevensy.



Date of action: 1st July 1690.

Location: off Cape Beachy Head, at the mouth of the Pevensey River that French sailors then pronounced Béveziers. Approximate geographical coordinates of the sea battlefield: 50° 80' north latitude and 00° 37' east longitude.

Conflict: War of the League of Augsburg [1688–1697].

Background: The French fleet had left Brest on 22 June, doubled the Isle of Wight on 5 July. Jean Bart, disguised as a fisherman, then set out on a reconnaissance, in a rowboat equipped with nets of fishing. He discovered the Anglo-Dutch fleet at anchor under Cape Beachy Head. For three days he carefully explored the whole area, answering "fisherman" when an English sentry hailed him. Ah! If the English had known that the great John Bart was among them! Then he returned to report to Tourville. But the headwinds did not allow the French to attack immediately.

Military Leaders in command ●French: Anne Hilarion de Costentin Tourville, vice-admiral of the Levant. ●Anglo-Dutch: Vice-Admiral Arthur Herbert de Torrington. Admirals Ashby and Van de Putte also commanded.

Military Forces involved ●*Anglo-Dutch Navies*: 60 ships of the line and many frigates, 18,915 men and 4,153 guns. ●*Marine Royale*: 75 ships of the line, 6 frigates and 20 burners mounted by 20,216 men with 4,600 guns,

VANGUARD White French Squadron Source: Clowes, Vol.2, p.335.

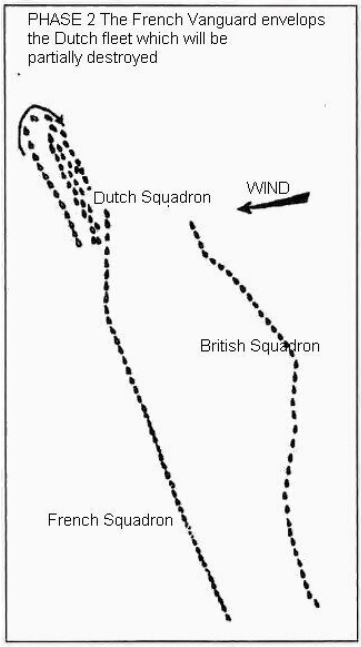
●1-Le FIER (68, De Relingues), ●2-Le FORT (52, De La Harteloire), ●3-Le MAURE (52, De La Galissonière), ●4-L'ÉCLATANT (64, De Septesmes), ●5-Le CONQUÉRANT (70, V/Adm. De Villette-Murçai), ●6-Le COURTI-SAN (62, De Pointis),●7-L'INDIEN (50, De Roussel), ●8-Le TRIDENT (52, De Ryberette), ●9-Le HARDI (58, Des Gouttes). ●10-Le SAINT-LOUIS (56, De La Roque-Persin), ●11-L'EXCELLENT (56, De Montbrun), ●12-Le POMPEUX (74, d'Aligre), ●13-Le DAUPHIN ROYAL (110, Admiral Châteaurenault), ●14-L'ARDENT (62, d'Infreville de St. Aubin), ●15-Le BON (52, De Digoin du Palais), ●16-●Le FENDANT (52, Treillebois de la Vigerie), 17-●Le COURAGEUX (60, De Sévigné), 18-●Le COURONNÉ (58, R/Adm. De Langeron), 19-●Le FERME (54, De Vandricourt), ●20-Le T »MÉRAIRE (52, Du Rivan-Huet), *Le SOLIDE, *L'ALCION, *L'ÉOLE[58], and six fireships.

CENTRE – French White SQUADRON

●21-Le BRUSQUE (50, De Recours), ●22-L'ARROGANT (54, Chev. Des Adrets), ●23-L'ARC-EN-CIEL (44, De Sainte-Manre), ●24-Le HENRI (62, d'Amblimont), ●25-Le SOUVERAIN (80, R/Adm. De Nesmond), ●26-Le BRILLANT (66, De Beaujeu), ●27-Le NEPTUNE (46, Forbin), ●28-Le SANS-PAREIL (58, De La Rougère), ●29-Le FIDÈLE (46, De Forbin Gardanne), ●30-Le DIAMANT (56, De Serquigny), ●31-Le SÉRIEUX (56, De Bellefontaine), ●32-Le TONNANT (70, de La Porte), ●33-LE-SOLEIL-ROYAL (98, **Adm. Tourville**), ●34-Le SAINT-PHILIPPE (80, Coëtlogon)),

[58] Vessels thus indicated * were not in the line of battle.

●35-Le MARQUIS (80, Château-Morand), ●36-Le FURIEUX (60, Desnots), ●37-Le FORTUNÉ (58, Pallas), ●38-L'APOLLON (56, Bidault), ●39-Le SAINT-MICHEL (54, De Villars), ●40-L'ENTREPRENANT (56, Sebeville), -●41-Le MAGNIFIQUE (76, V/Adm. d'Amfreville), ●42-Le CONTENT (56, De Saint-Pierre), ●43-Le VERMANDOIS (58, Du Chalard), ●44-Le CHEVAL-MARIN (40, d'Amfreville), ●45-Le FOUGUEUX (58, De Saint-Marc), *-Le FAUCON (44, De Montbault), *and six fireships.



REAR – French White & Blue SQUADRON at the Mizzen.

●45-Le COMTE (40, De La Roche-Courbon-Blénac), ●46-Le VIGILANT, (52, De Chalais), ●53-Le PARFAIT (62, Machault), ●54-Le TRIOMPHANT (70, R/Adm. De Flacourt), ●55-Le BOURBON (62, Hervault), ●56-Le VAILLANT (48, (De Feuquières), ●57-Le DUC (48, Pallières), ●58-Le CAPABLE (54, La Boissière), ●59-Le BRAVE (54, Champigny), ●60-Le FRANÇOIS (46, d'Hailly), ●61-L'AGRÉABLE (58, De La Motte-Genouillé), ●62-Le FLORISSANT (80, Cogolin), ●63-Le GRAND (80, **Admiral Victor Marie d'Estrées**), ●64-Le BELLIQUEUX (74, Des Francs) ●65-Le PRINCE (56, Des Adrets), Le PRUDENT (52, Des Herbiers), ●66-Le MODÉRÉ (Augers), ●67-Le FLEURON (54 (Chabert), ●68-L'AIMABLE (70, Magnon), ●69- L'INTRÉPIDE (80, V/Adm Jean Gabaret) ●70- Le GLORIEUX (60, De Bellei-Erard), ●71-L'ILLUSTRE (66, Rosmadec), ●72-Le TERRIBLE (74, Pannetier), *Le LÉGER (44, Du Ronvroy), *and six fireships.

Clowes, Vol.2,p.335. - VANGUARD-White Dutch Squadron

●1-WAPEN-VAN-UTRECHT (64 guns, Cptn Decker), ●2-WAPEN-VAN-ALKMAAR (50, Cptn Calf, ●3-THOLEN (60, Calis), ●**4**-WEST-VRIESLAND (82, V-Adm. Van Callenburgh), ●5-PRINSES-MARIA (92, R-Adm. Gilles Scheij), ●6-CASTRICUM (50, Kuijper), ●7-AGATHA (50, Van der Zaan),●8-STAD-EN-LANDEN (52, Abraham Taelman), ●9-MAAGD-VAN-ENKHUIZEN (72, Van der Poel), ●10-NOORD HOLLAND (46, Swaen), ●11-MAAGD-VAN-DORDRECHT (68, Anthonij Pieter-on), ●12-

HOLLANDIA (74, Lt/Ad. Cornelius Evertsen), ●13-VELUWE (68, R/Ad Jan van Brakel), ●14-PROVINCIE-VAN-UTRECHT (50, Jan van Convent), ●15-MAZE (64, Jan Snellen), ●16-VRIESLAND (64, Philips van der Goes), ●17-ELSWOUT (50, Noortheij), ●18-REIJGERSBERGE (74, A.F. van Zijll), ●19-GEKROONDE BURG (62, V.-Ad. C. van de Putte),●20-NOORD-HOLLAND (72, R.-Adm. Jan Dick), ●21-VEERE (60,Moselman), ●22- CORTIENNE 50, A. den Boer), And four fireships.

CENTRE Red English Squadron

1●-PLYMOUTH (60, Richard Carter), 2●-DEPTFORD (50, William Kerr), 3●ELIZABETH (70, David Mitchell), 4●SANDWICH[59] (90, ???), 5●EXPEDITION (70, John Clements), 6●WARSPITE (70, Stafford Fairbone), 7●WOOLWICH (54, James Gother), 8●LION (60, John Torpley), 9●RUPERT (66, George Pomeroy), 10●ALBEMARLE (90, Sir Francis Wheler), 11●GRAFTON (70, Henry of Grafton), 12●ROYAL SOVEREIGN[60] (100, John Neville), 13●WIINDSOR CASTLE (90, George Churchill), 14●LENOX (70, John Granville), 15●STIRLING CASTLE (70, Anthony Hastings), 16●YORK (60, Thomas Hopsonn), 17●SUFFOLK (70, Wolfran Cornewall), 18●HAMPTON COURT (70, John Layton), 19●DUCHESS[61] (90, Thomas Gillam), 20●HOPE (70, George Byng), 21●RESTORATION (70, William Botham), 22●CONSTANT WARWICK (36, John Beverley) ●and 8 fireships[62]

REAR – Blue English Squadron

23●ANNE (70, John Tyrrel), 24●BONAVENTURE (48, John Hubbard), 25●EDGAR (64, John Jennifer), 26●EXETER (70, George Mees), 27●BREDA (70, Matthew Tennant), 28●St.ANDREW (96, Robert Dorrell), 29●CORONATION (90, John Menden), 30●ROYAL KATHERINE (82, Matthew Aylmer), 31●CAMBRIDGE 70, Simon Foulks), 32●BERWICK (70, Henry Martin), 33●SWALLOW (48, Benjamin Walters), 34●DEFIANCE (64, John Graydon), 35●CAPTAIN (70, Daniel Jones), and 8 fireships[63].

Strategy or tactics: In advance t-garde of the French sailed the Blanche et Bleue squadron with 24 ships [Victor-Marie d'Estrées]. Then followed the White Battlebody with the SOLEIL-ROYAL [98 guns, Tourville] and 26 large ships. In the

[59] ●Flag of Vice-Admiral Sir John Ashby.
[60] ●Flag of Rear-Admiral Rooke.
[61] ●Flag of Vice-Admiral Sir Ralph Delaval.
[62] ●Fireships; CENTRE: Wolf, Vulture, Rocbuck, Dolphin, Owner's Love, Speedwell, Hound, Spy. REAR: Fox, Thomas and Elizabeth, Charles, Griffin, Hawk, Cygnet, Hunter, Cadiz Merchant.
[63] ● The fireships were not in the Battle Line.

rearguard followed the Squadron Bleue [26 vessels] around the DAUPHIN-ROYAL Le [Châteaurenaultl. And to complete the training, 5 fireboats: The UNFORTUNATE, The RECKLESS, The IMPERTINENT, The FIRE-BUG and The FOOLISH.

Summary of action: Vice-Admiral Herbert de Torrington wanted to fight as soon as he heard of the arrival of the French, and the Dutch admirals he had under his command had difficulty in making him wait for reinforcements. But on July 10th, he gave the sign of the sailing aboard the ROYAL-SOVEREIGN.

The French fleet was deployed in rectilinear formation oriented N.O.-S.E. The French line had broken down after taking battle deployment. Torrington had the advantage of the wind and currents which Tourville had tried in vain to take from him. The Anglo-Dutch therefore attacked tailwind, parallel to the French, In a hurry to fight, the Dutch fleet, which formed the Allied vanguard, moved away from the English line and threw itself on the French vanguard.

The two vanguards began to cannon each other in the middle of a cloud of smoke. The French flagship Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL and her aft deckhand L'ARDENT, were attacked by huge Dutch ships and the fight became furious. The bridges were quickly covered with corpses and wounded. The ARDENT, victim of serious damage, received permission from Châteaurenault to leave the line of battle in order to go and heal his wounds a little away.

But, while part of the French Guard supported the fight, the remte of this guard overtook the combatants and veered back to envelop the Dutch fleet and take it in taille (on both sides). . Machine-gunned and shelled on both sides at the same time, the Dutch ships, riddled with cannonballs, fought desperately. A few managed to escape, but the majority of the others fought like lions and were seriously damaged, dismasted, covered with deaths. VRIESLAND agreed to fly her flag only to the last extremity, when almost all her sailors were killed or wounded.

STRENGTH OF THE LINE-OF-BATTLE ON EACH SIDE				
From Clowes	ANGLO-DUTCH		FRENCH	
	Ships	**Guns**	**Ships**	**Guns**
Van.	22	1374	20	1214
Centre	21	1410	25	1518
Rear	13	912	23	1390
Total	**56**	**3696**	**68**	**4122**

However, after a while, the English squadron finally decided to go to the "battlefield" to take part in the fight. The SANDWICH [Admiral Ashby] and the ships of his retinue clashed with the guns of the SOLEIL-ROYAL. After a violent and noisy fight, Le TONNANT Français was momentarily distraught. Some English ships, dismasted, abandoned Combat[64].

The English Vice-Admiral Herbert de Torrington for his part[65] was able to find the weak point of the French line, the junction between the Corps de bataille and the Rear-guard, and he contented himself with attacking this point instead of going to lend a hand to his other ships in danger before Le SOLEIL-ROYAL. Le CONTENT, L'ENTREPRENANT and L'APOLLON[66] attacked with bite. Finally, the gunners of the FOUGUEUX [58] surprised everyone by forcing the English flagship to break the fight!

All along the line, thebat twent had been deadly. Little by little, evening fell. The breeze had finally beenin favour of the French. Tourville already foresaw a complete destruction of the Anglo-Dutch fleet, which was showing great exhaustion. But the favorable winds[67] did not last.

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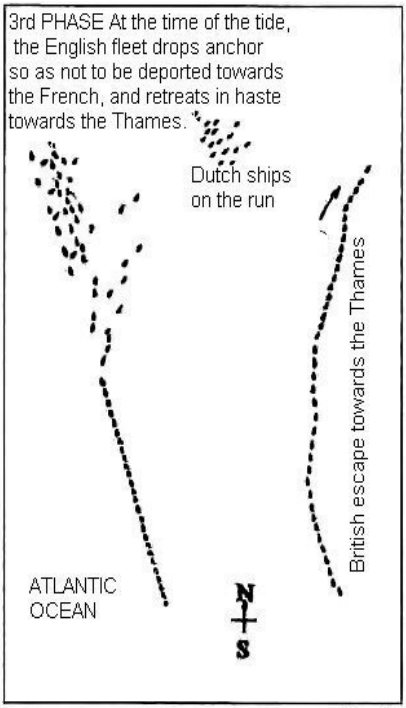
[64] ●Twelve Dutch ships, which had strongly participated in the fight, were completely dismasted.
[65] .●The ROYAL-SOVEREIGN, 100 canons.
[66] ●All three between 50 and 60 guns
[67] ●For the French.

The English vice-admiral sent a last fire on the French line ils furent envoyés à la curéeto english, which Cabaret's gunners sank before he could reach his objective.



This was the moment when the flagship The ROYAL-SOVEREIGN hoisted the signal of the retreat to one of its masts. While the French were preparing for "la curée" [looting and massacre], nature itself would oppose this killing. Shortly before, the tide had turned, Herbert, warned by his pilots, had anchored[68] under sails. But Tourville drifted and soon found himself dragged westward by the ebb tide current. The absence of wind prevented the French from returning to finish off the Anglo-Dutch. By a real misfortune (for the French), the French galleys, which alone could have maneuvered without wind, had not yet made their junction with the corps de bataille.

Night finally set, the battle zone remained illuminated by burning ships. Admiral Van de Putte's ship burned until daylight, another, The NOORD-QUARTIER, sank during the night.

For two days and two nights, after the return of favorable winds, La Villette's French division harassed the last Dutch

[68] ●Anchor.

ships[69] still in combat that had not been able to flee quickly enough to the Thames as the rest of the Anglo-Dutch fleet. The French succeeded in sinking the WAPEN-VAN-UTRECHT and forced two or three other ships to throw themselves ashore. The THOLEN was badly damaged and another 70 guns was scuttled and burned by her crew.

Casualties & Losses ●The Anglo-Dutch fleet lost 17 warships. Most of the others were damaged. ●The French fleet, although having suffered great damage, did not lose any ships that day.

Consequence of this Anglo-Dutch defeat: This defeat threw panic in England. For if the French were masters of the sea, nothing could prevent them from landing on the island. In Holland, violent anti-English indignation swept the country. The English Vice-Admiral, to whom William of Orange [a Dutchman] had entrusted supreme command by placing Dutch admirals under his command, had, it seems, sacrificed the Dutch fleet for England. The English Supreme Commander was therefore arrested, as soon as he arrived in England, and remained detained in the Tower of London for many months before being court-martialed. Despite this, on November 10, 1690, the court martial — entirely English — acquitted him of all cowardice and deliberately sacrificed the Dutch fleet. However, King William III of Orange, a Dutchman himself as we have said, never forgave him or gave him any more command.

Sources & Readings ● Tourville, by Dan tel Dessert, Fayard, Paris, 2002. ●Béveziers (1690), la France prend la maîtrise de la Manche, by Jean Meyer, Paris, Economica, 1393. ●William Laird Clowes in *The Royal Navy*, Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1898. 7 Vol. ●Le duel entre Tourville et Seignelay, Béveziers et Plymouth, 1690, par Jean Peter, Paris, Institut de stratégie comparée, Economica, 2001. ●Letter to Mgr. L'Archevesque de Paris, [...] to make the *Te Deum* sing in the church of Nostre-Dame, in thanksgiving for the victory won over the English and Dutch fleets by the naval army of HM

[69] ●Abandoned by Vice-Admiral Herbert.

Tourville, commanded by M. le comte de Tourville, vice-admiral de France, Imp. of E. Michallet, Paris, 1690. ●Tourvillc and Béveziers, E. Taillemite, Pierre Guillaume, Paris, Economica, 1991. ●The Battle of Beachy Head, Robert Armstrong, Eastbourne, 20 Pevesey Rd., Eastbourne, E. [Sussex], 1979.

Naval Battle of Barfleur[70].

Other name: This battle is sometimes called *Battle of The Hogue* by the English who add, for a very understandable purpose, the raid on Cherbourg[71] and, above all, on Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue [June 2, 1692].

Date of action: May 29, 1692.

Location: In an area located 40 km northeast of Barfleur, Cotentin peninsula. Battlefield geographs: latitude 50° 02' Nord and 01°58' west longitude.

Conflict: War of the League of Augsburg [1688–1697].

Background: The partisans of James II of England[72] **1** and the forces placed at his disposal by Louis XIV under the orders of Marshal de Bellefonds had assembled at the camp of Quinéville, near Saint-Vaas t-la-Hougue. Tourville owed them cross the Channel. But the Royal Navy lacked sailors. When Tourville left Brest on May 12, 1692, with only 39 vessels, at least twenty ships remained immobilized in the port for lack of crews. Only five ships arrived at him on the eve of the battle. The French squadron therefore numbered 44 ships. *This battle is considered by English sea historians as a model of courage, audacity and fearlessness. As for the French, it is probably the naval battle of which they are most proud*. This recklessness is explained by a message received the day before the battle by Tourville: « [...] His majesty absolutely wants him to leave Brest on the said day, April 25, even if he would have notice

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[70] ●In addition to the general works cited in fine and those mentioned in reference at the bottom of the pages, the texts of this chapter are the synthesis of the following works: *Souvenirs historiques sur Mahé de La Bourdonnais*; *The Battle of La Hogue*. *Éloge de la Tour d'Auvergne*, *Portzmoguer* (Primauguet), by Robert Surcouf, Éditions de V. Billois, Saint-Malo, 1886.

[71] ●31 May and 1 June.

[72] ●Catholic King dethroned by William 111 of Orange.

that the enemies would be out with a greater number of vessels than those that will be able to follow him..., [His Majesty] wants him to get close enough to recognize them himself, even if that should compel him to fight against..." These venomous remarks, from Pontchartrain, Minister of the Navy, were intended to pique the honor of Tourville whom he did not like. The result was the terrible *Battle of Barfleur* which gave eternal glory to Tourville[73]..., much to the chagrin of the jealous minister, but (we repeat) which resulted in the death of 3,700 men.

Military Leaders in command, ●*French*: Admiral Tourville. ●*Anglo-Dutch*: English Admiral Russell and Dutch Admiral van Almonde.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: 44 ships carrying 20,900 men with 3,240 guns, according to the English Clowes[74]. ●*Royal Navy* and *Dutch Navy*: 99 ships[75] carrying 53,463 English with an artillery of 6,820 guns[76]. The Dutch added 9,182 men and 2160 canons. That is, in total, 9,000 Allied canons taking the lowest [English] figures and more than 60,000 men.

Strategy or tactics: For reasons of national rivalry, bi-national squadrons are less effective than mono-national ones. To illustrate this, we have the striking examples of the Battle of Trafalgar 1805 for the Franco-Spaniards, and the Battle of Barfleur 1692 for the Anglo-Dutch.This battle confirms the saying that the leader's will to win can work miracles even with outnumbered troops. ●Royal Navy: The Allied vanguard [White Squadron] consisted of the 36 Dutch ships of Van Almonde. Then followed the Red Squadron, in the center[77], 31 English

[73] ●And 3,700 sailors dead and who left Pontchartrain only a lake name in Louisiana. Fort Pontchartrain has disappeared under the concrete of the City of Detroit.
[74] ●3114 according to Toudouze.
[75] ●Including 63 English ships and 36 Dutch ships.
[76] ●According to Toudouze and according to our calculations, the *Anglo-Allied Maritime Nations* had 7154 canons.
[77] ●Admiral Russell, Vice-Admiral Ralph Delawall and Rear-Admiral Cloudesley Shovell.

ships in 3 divisions. And, finally, the rearguard[78] had 32 English ships. ●The long line of the Marine Royale was also formed into three squadrons. The vanguard [Blue & White Squadron commanded by D'Amfreville] composed the right wing. To the south: 14 ships to oppose the 36 Dutch ships. In the Centre, Blanche Tourville's squadron had 16 ships to oppose the 31 of the British Red Squadron. To the left [or rearguard] of the French line, the 14 ships of Gabaret's Bleu Squadron faced Ashby's 52 English ships. At the last moment, however, a counter-order was sent to

Comparison of the forces engaged in the Battle of Barfleur by the British historian William Laid Clowes in *The Royal Navy*, Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1898. Vol.II, p.348				
BRITISH & DUTCH ALLIES			**FRENCH**	
Flag-officers		Ships	Flag-officers	Ships
Dutch Van-guard	Vice-Adm. G. van Callen-burgh R-Adm.P.van der Goes Vice-Adm. P. van Almonde R-Adm. C.van de Putte R-Adm Geleijn Evertsen	**36**	M.de Nesmond Lt-Gen d'Amfreville M. de Relingues	**16**
English Centre	R-Adm Sir C.Shovell Ad.of the Fleet E.Russell Vice-Adm. Sir R.Delavall	**31**	M.de Villette-Murçai Comte de Tourville M.de Langeron	**14**
English Rear-guard	Vice-Adm.Geo Rooke Adm.Sir J.Ashby R-Adm.R.Carter	**32**	M.de Coëtlogon V.-Adm. Gabaret M.Pannetier	**14**
Total ships of the line		**99**	Total ships of the line	**44**
Frigates and fireships		**38**	Frigates and fireships	**13**
Guns		**6756**	Guns	**3240**

[78] ●Admiral Ashby, Vice-Admiral Rooke and Rear-Admiral Carter.

Tourville, he was asked not to measure himself against a concentration as strong as these two navies [English and Dutch] combined. Pontchartrain feared to be held responsible for a disaster. But the die was cast, the enemies were already facing each other. Tourville could have refused the fight, since *he held the wind* and no one would have thought of reproaching him. But he accepted it, probably sure of a defeat at the hands of the *Maritime Nations*, according to their designation at the time. With only three ships, Pannetier managed to occupy the 32 English ships of Ashby's Blue Squadron, which was a tour de force.

Strategically speaking, it was impossible for the French to get a success, even a half-success, with such a disproportion of naval forces. In the days that followed, the Anglo-Dutch were able to take advantage of it. Admiral Castex expressed it clearly in his "Strategic Theories": "To obtain in combat the decision we desire, it will be necessary to engage it in the most favorable conditions, with the maximum of means. We will concentrate as many forces as possible in the direction of this main objective, to appear in the battle with all our strengths. And if luckily fortune smiles on us in this battle, we will be careful not to remain on a half-success[79].»

MARINE ROYALE		
NAME	**GUNS**	**COMMANDER**
1●Le GAILLARD	52	chevalier D'Amfreville
2●Le MERVEILLEUX	98	Marquis d'Amfreville
3●Le PRINCE	56	De Bagneux
4●Le SOLEIL-ROYAL	104	Des Nos (et **Tourville**)
5●L'ADMIRABLE	96	De Beaujeu
6●Le SÉRIEUX	64	Blénac
7●Le BRAVE	58	Chalais
8●LE GLORIEUX	64	Châteaumorant
9●LE MAGNIFIQUE	86	Coëtlogon
10●Le COURTISAN	64	Colbert de Saint-Mars[80]

[79] ●*Théories stratégiques*, Admiral Raoul Castex, Société d'édition géographique, maritime et coloniale, Paris, 1929, p. 205.

[80] ●Charles Colbert, Seigneur de Saint-Mars, fut lieutenant général au présidial de Reims, marié à Marguerite de Mesvilliers, dont le fils aîné, François de Colbert de Saint-Mars. engendra trois filles et un fils qui mourut sans postérité en 1722 et dont le seconde fils, André, décédé en 1704, fut évêque d'Auxerre.

11●L'ILLUSTRE	68	De Combes (1)
12●L'ORGUEILLEUX	94	Courbon-Blénac &**Gabaret**
13●Le MAURE	50	Des Augiers
14●Le CONQUÉRANT	86	Du Magnou
15●Le BRILLANT	62	De Combes (2)
16●La SYRÈNE	64	Duquesne
17●L'EXCELLENT	60	Du Rivau-Huet
18●Le MODÉRÉ	52	D'Évry
19●Le SANS-PAREIL	62	Ferville
20●Le DIAMANT	50	Feuquières
21●La PERLE	52	Forbin
22●Le LAURIER	64	Hervault
23●Le SAINT-PHILIPPE	84	Infreville
24●Le SAINT-ESPRIT	64	La Galissonnière
25●Le FIER	90	La Harteloire
26●Le COURAGEUX	58	La Luzerne
27●Le SOUVERAIN	80	De Langeron
28●Le HENRI	64	La Roche-Allart
29●Le FORT	68	La Rongère
30●Le SAINT-LOUIS	64	La Roche-Persin
31●Le TRIOMPHANT	80	Machault-Belmont
32●La COURONNE	76	Montbrun
33●Le FLEURON	56	Montgon
34●Le MONARQUE	90	Nesmond
35●Le GRAND	84	Pannetier
36●Le BOURBON	68	Perrinet
37●L'AIMABLE	70	De Réals
38●Le FOUDROYANT	104	Relingue
39●L'ENTENDU	40	Ricoux
40●Le CONTENT	68	Saint-Maure
41●L'AMBITIEUX	92	Saujon (et **Villette-Mursay**)
42●Le TERRIBLE	80	Sèbeville
43●Le TONNANT	80	Septèmes
44●Le SAINT-MICHEL	60	Villars
TOTAL: 44 ships, 11 fireships, 20,900 crew with 3,114 canons		

ALLIES		
DUTCH WHITE SQUADRON – Admiral Philips van ALMONDE		
1●NOORDHOLLAND	68	
2●Zeelandia	90	
3●Ter Goes	54	
4●Gelderland	64	
5●Veere	62	
6●Conink William	92	**Vice-amiral van der Putte**
7●Eerste Edele	74	
8●Medenblick	50	
9●Keurvorst van Brandenburg	92	
10●Westvriesland	88	

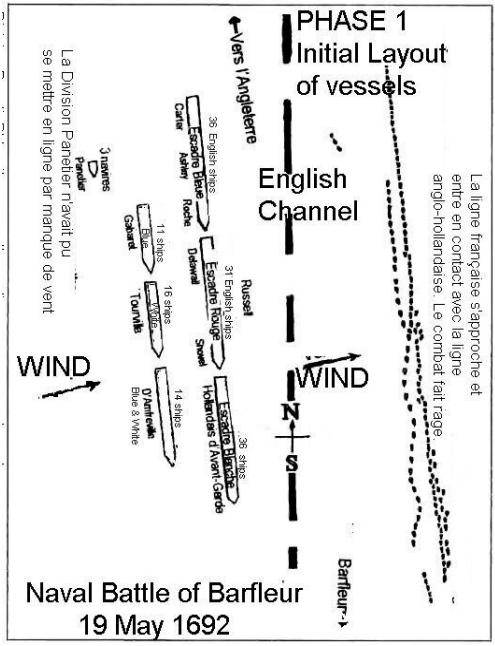
11●Zeeland	64	
12●Ripperda	50	
13●Slot Muyden	72	
14●Prins	92	**Admiral van Almonde**
15●Elswoud	72	
16●Schattershoeff	50	
17●Leyden	64	
18●Princes	92	**Vice-admiral Gilles Schey**
19●Amsterdam	64	
20●Stadt-en-Land	50	
21●Veluw	64	
22●Casteel-Medenblick	86	**Vice-admiral G. Callenburgh**
23●Ridderschap	72	
24●Maegt van Doort	64	
25●Admiraal-Generaal	84	**Rear-Admiral Ph. van der Goes**
26●Zeven Provinciën	76	
ENGLISH RED SQUADRON – Admiral of the Fleet Edward RUSSELL		
27●St.MICHAEL	90	Thomas Hopsonn
28●LENOX	70	John Munden
29●BONAVENTURE	48	John Hubbard
30●ROYAL KATHERINE	82	Wolfran Cornewall
31●ROYAL SOVEREIGN	100	Cpt.Sanders, **V-Ad. Ralph Delaval**
32●CAPTAIN	70	Daniel Jones
33●CENTURION	48	Francis Wyvill
34●BURFORD	70	Thomas Harlow
35●ELIZABETH	70	Stafford Fairborne
36●RUPERT	66	Basile Beaumont
37●EAGLE	70	John Leake
38●CHESTER	48	Thomas Gillam
39●St.ANDREW	96	George Churchill
40●BRITANNIA	100	Cpt.Fletcher, **Admiral E.Russel**
41●LONDON	96	Matthew Aylmer
42●GREENWICH	54	Richard Edwards
43●RESTORATION	70	James Gother
44●GRAFTON	70	William Bokenham
45●HAMPTON COURT	70	John Graydon
46●SWIFTSURE	70	Richard Clarke
47●St.ALBANS	50	Richard Fitzpatrick
48●KENT	70	John Neville
49●ROYAL WILLIAM	100	Cpt.Jennings, **r/adm. Cl. Shovell**
50●SANDWICH	90	Anthony Hastings
29●OXFORD	54	James Wishart
30●CAMBRIDGE	70	Richard Lestock
31●RUBY	50	George Mees
ENGLISH BLUE SQUADRON – Admiral John Ashby		
32●HOPE	70	Henry Robinson

33●DEPTFORD	50	William Kerr
34●ESSEX	70	John Bridges
35●DUKE	90	Cpt.Wright, **r/adm.Richard Carter**
36●OSSORY	90	John Tyrrel
37●WOOLWICH	54	Christopher Myngs
38●SUFFOLK	70	Christopher Billopp
39●CROWN	50	Thomas Warren
40●DREADNOUGHT	64	Thomas Coall
41●STIRLING CASTLE	70	Benjamin Walters
42●EDGAR	72	John Torpley
43●MONMOUTH	63	Robert Robinson
44●DUCHESS	90	John Clements
45●VICTORY	100	Cpt.E.Stanley, **adm.John Ashby**
46●VANGUARD	90	Christopher Mason
47●ADVENTURE	44	Thomas Dilkes
48●WARSPITE	70	Caleb Grantham
49●MONTAGU	62	Simon Foulks
50●DEFIANCE	64	Edward Gurney
51●BERWICK	70	Henry Martin
52●LION	60	Robert Wiseman
53●NORTHUMBERLAND	70	Andrew Cotten
54●ADVICE	50	Charles Hawkins
55●NEPTUNE	96	Cpt. T. Gardner, **v/adm G.Rooke**
56●WINDSOR CASTLE	90	Lord Danby
57●EXPEDITION	70	Edward Dover
58●MONCK	60	Benjamin Hoskins
59●RESOLUTION	70	Edward Good
60●ALBEMARLE	90	Francis Wheler
TOTAL: 90 ships 7,154 guns (6,756 according to Clowes) **and 38 frigates and fireships**		

Summary of the action: At dawn on 29 May, the two fleets were in sight, 40 km north-east of Barfleur. The Anglo-Dutch lined up in battle across the wind on a northern line. The French approached slowly, as the wind was weak. They held the wind [from the southwest]. Without waiting, Tourville gave the signl and the whole French line, wind in your back, threw itself on the Anglo-Dutch line and engaged the fight with such ardor[81] that the allies thought at first of a trap. The SOLEIL-ROYAL de Tourville, at the centr,faced Russell's BRITANN1A. But just before the two lines met, the capricious wind fell and the ships

[81] ●"[...] the resolute manner in which his ship bore down was remarked by all." [Clowes, *The Royal Navy*].

came to a standstill. So most ships put a rowboat into the sea to be rowed. At 1:00 from the sailor, finally, the two lines reached cannon range. A Dutch ship opened fire on the SAINT-LOUIS and the whole line ignited in an instant by the fire of half of the 12,000 guns of the three war fleets. A gigantic fireworks display in a thunder of the end of the world.



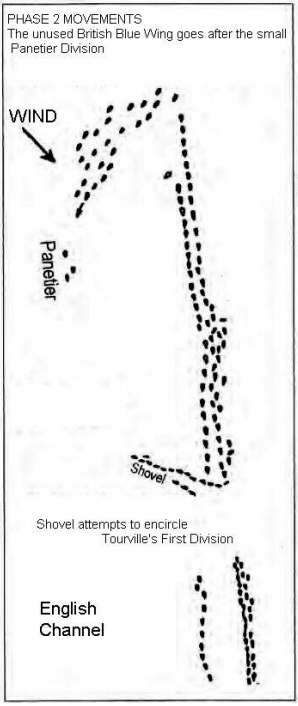
Three large ships of 100 guns each[82] assaulted, during four hours of furious combat The French SOLEIL-ROYAL which repelled all assaults. Around 1 p.m., the SOLEIL-ROYAL, whose rigging had suffered greatly, had to be towed back into the wind, while D'Amfreville, thanks to the wind that was picking up, ran with five ships to replace it facing the English center.

On the French left wing, the Pannetier division had had more difficulty[83] to approach within gun range of the allies. Also, the 32 ships of the English Blue Squadron, having almost no one in front, had thrown themselves into the space between the three ships of Pannetier and those of Gabaret. Facing them, therefore, Pannetier withdrew to the south-west so as not to be

[82] ●The BR1TANNIA, The SAINT-ANDREW, The LONDON,
[83] ●Due to lack of wind.

destroyed and, as a result, dragged Ashby's Blue Squadron after him, away from the battlefield, thus bringing some relief to the Center.

In the early afternoon, the English admiral, who was making full use of his numerical superiority, *almost* succeeded in encircling the French fleet. In the center, eight or nine French ships (including Tourville and Villette [L'AMBITIEUX]) continued to furiously attack the heart of the Allied fleet. L'AMBITIEUX bullied The ROYAL-SOVEREIGN [Delawall]. From time to time, totally helpless ships had to be towed out of the fray by the oars of their longboats: Thus The CHESTER [English], The EAGLE [English], Le HENRI [French]. Le FORT [French].



Seeing that the Centered the French line supporting the fight against forces several times superior, Rear-Admiral Coëtlogon left the rearguard and launched his ship [Le MAGNIFIQUE] followed by Le PRINCE[84] in support, despite the orders of his hierarchical superior Gabaret. The melee became inextricable. Everyone was firing furiously in visibility diminished by the smoke and especially by the mist that thickened by the minute. When the wind dropped, visibility became zero, to improve a little at the slightest breeze.

Suddenly, the fighting ceased completely, for visibility no longer allowed to distinguish enemies from friends, just as

[84] ●Captain Bagneux

Tourville was about to succumb to the ever-increasing number of Englishmen attacking him. This respite allowed the French to breathe for a moment and rebuild a little in the mist. The tide was about to change direction, Tourville immediately ordered the French line to anchor, while the English centre began to be dragged eastward.

The English rearguard (Ashby's Blue Squadron), attracted to the west of the French line by Pannetier's 3 ships and which was therefore in the back of the between French, understood the maneuver of the French and also anchored so as not to drift and to be able to take the French from behind. The latter were, at this very moment, reduced to 36 ships, because the 3 ships of Pannetier and the 5 of Nesmond could not be able to rout favorable winds to regain the line of battle.

Finally, the wind picked up again, this time from the northeast. He finished sweeping away the mist and discovering the battlefield in all its horror. The cannonade immediately resumed with intensity and the Angio-Dutch, death in their souls, prepared for a new assault by the French. On some Anglo-Dutch ships, smoldering with dead and wounded, some combatants panicked, but the officers soon restored discipline. The French artillery went into action. Evening was falling.

To spare his crews from total exhaustion, Russell decided to try to burn the French ships. Many fireships were therefore sent against them. The SOLEIL-ROYAL alone managed to avoid five; THE AMBITIEUX three, which burned for a long time in the night, as if to illuminate the horror.

It was then that, unable to sustain the fight, the Allied fleets decided to abandonthe field. Russell ordered the Red Squadron, the Cbetween English, to stall. The Dutch fleet, which did not want to bear the burden of combat alone, soon followed. Then the English Blue Squadron [Ashby], which was behind the backs of the French, also decided to follow the retreat; but Ashby had the very bad idea of passing his 32 ships into

The intervals of the French battle line. As the English ships marched slowly through the intervals, they were systematically riddled *at point-blank range* with cannonballs and anti-personnel bullets, and several, including Shovell's flagship, the ROYAL-WILLIAM itself, were so badly treated that they were left helpless, that is, unable to maneuver on their own. The DUKE lost its admiral [Carter] and commander.

This terrible battle of 15 hours finally ended in the light of the English fires which finished consuming themselves unnecessarily. The Français remained masters of the battlefield. Tourville had not lost any ships. None had totally incapacitated damage, although blood was dripping down all the bridges.

About one o'clock in the morning, Tourville gave the order to raise anchor. Nesmond sent two damaged ships to La Hougue and two others to Le Havre. During the night and in an intense mist, Tourville managed to gather 27 ships.

Casualties & Losses ●French: 1700 killed and wounded. ●Anglo-Dutch: 2000 killed, including 2 admirals, and 3000 wounded.

Consequence of this English defeat: This action is probably the naval battle of which the French are most proud.

Sources & Readings ●Historical memories on Malta de La Bourdonnais; le Combat de La Hogue. In praise of La Tour d'Auvergne. Portzmoguer [Primauguet] , Robert Surcouf, Éditions de V. Billois. Saint-Malo, 1886. ●The Defeat of James Siuart's Armada, 1692, Philip Aubrey, Leicester Uni versity Press, Leicester, Totowa [N.J.], 1979. ● Chronicles of La Hougue. Vol. I: "La guerre de la Ligue d'Augsbourg et la fin du Grand Règne, 1688-1715", Roger Lepelley, Publication R. Lepelley, Versailles, 1992. ●Chronicles of La Hougue. Tome II: " La bataille de La Hougue, récits, études et réflexions", Roger Lepelley, Publication R. Lepelley, Versailles, 1992.

Naval Raid on Cherbourg.

Date of the action: May 31-June 1st, 1692.

Location: Cotentin Peninsula, France. Geographic coordinates: 49° 39' N latitude and 01° 39' W longitude.

Conflict: War of the League of Augsburg, 1688-1697. : the politico-religious war was raging between the Protestant bloc on one side and France on the other.

Context The naval battle of Barfleur between the French on the one hand and the English and Dutch fleets on the other was a real disaster for the Anglo-Dutch. On 29 May 1692, 44 French ships and 13 frigates and brigs, armed with 3240 guns, defeated 99 English and Dutch ships with 38 frigates and brigs, all armed with 6756 guns. It was a total disgrace for the Royal Navy and the Dutch fleet. The honor of the Royal Navy had to be saved at all costs and above all *the lives* of the English admirals (Russell, Ashby, Rooke, Shovell, Delavall and Carter) who were undoubtedly going to be court-martialed and shot without mercy, as were the admirals who lost battles through lack of valor and bravery. Faced with this threat, at dawn the next day the English ships that were still in condition began to search for the most damaged French ships that had taken refuge in small groups in the ports of Cherbourg and Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue in order to repair their damages under the guns of the fortresses.

Faced with this death threat, that very evening the British admirals began to look for culprits. It was the fault of the wind being too light, of the fog threatening visibility, of the Dutch being too inactive: (Clowes writes p.351: "The Dutch could not, for the time, do much towards carrying out the desires of the commander-in-chief. Nevertheless, several of their ships succeeded in getting into close action [with the French], and The ZEVEN-PROVINCIËN, De Ruijter's famous flagship, had that day *nineteen killed and fourteen badly wounded*, while The ADMIRAAL GENERAAL lost *nine killed and thirty wounded*. [*These low numbers leads to believe that the Dutch*

hardly fought at all.] Clowes adds : ‘‘The hottest fighting, however, was in the Centre" [Which means that it was the English who fought most valiantly.] And since we had to choose a black sheep, a scapegoat, it would be Rear Admiral Carter; W.L. Clowes writes without hesitation on page 352 of Vol.2: "Carter was the officer whose loyalty and good faith had been most peculiarly suspected. Other officers had been believed to be disaffected; but rumor had charged Carter with being corrupt and treacherous as well. That night he silenced for ever those who would have impeached his honor. A shot struck him, and, as he realised that death had come to him, he said to Wright, his flag-captain: Fight the ship as long as she will swim[85]."

But the death of the scapegoat was not enough to save the other heads. It was necessary to make amends. For part of the evening, and especially at dawn the next day, the admirals with their barely damaged ships went in search of the most damaged French ships (and especially Le Soleil-Royal) which had taken refuge in small groups in the ports of Cherbourg and Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue in order to repair their damaged ships under the guns of the fortresses. "The morning of Friday, the 20th, broke foggy;... In the course of the morning, Tourville hauled down his flag in Le SOLEIL-ROYAL [dammaged] and transferred it to L’AMBITIEUX 92, which already carried the flag of Villette-Murçai... Vice-Admiral Delavall was ordered to take command of enough ships to deal with [to burn] the stranded flagship and with several vessels shich hovered near her."

Sir Ralph Delavall found with Le SOLEIL-ROYAL in Cherbourg Bay, two more large ships of the line (Le TRIOMPHANT and L'ADMIRABLE, both damaged). Transferring his flag to the St.ALBANS, Delavall took with him The RUBY and two fireships, and went to "reconnoitre"; but being met with a hot fire, retreated. On the following day, Sunday, the 22nd, he sent in his boats and three fireships, covering them with

[85] ●A pension of £200 a year was settled on Carter’s widow. (Admiralty Min. of Oct. 9th, 1692. Clowes, Vol.II, pp.352-353.

the guns of his larger vessels. The attack was stoutly opposed both by the ships and by a fort on shore ; but commander Thomas Heath, of the fireship BLAZE, succeeded in burning Le SOLEIL-ROYAL 106. Commander James Greenaway, of the WOLF, destroyed Le TRIOMPHANT 74; and the boats disposed of L'ADMIRABLE 90. Commander Thomas Foulis, of the HOUND, had his ship set on fire by hostile shot ere he could get sufficiently near to Le SOLEIL ROYAL to grapple her."

"The main body of the fleet spent the greater part of Sunday, the 22nd, in working, as far as possible, into the Bay of La Hougue, near the head of which 12 large [damaged] French ships were seen to have taken refuge." Twenty other French ships more or less damaged had taken refuge into St-Malo.

On Monday, the 23rd, Vice-Admiral Rooke[86], with several men-of-war and fireships, was ordered to destroy the French shipping in the bay. The enemy, however, had hauled the vessels so close in shore that only small craft could approach them; all the more difficult to approach since they re well covered by the fire of the forts. The boats of the fleet then got out, and, with the fireships, they burnt six French ships that night... On the following morning the boats were sent in again to complete the destruction, and the remaining 6 men-of-war were all fired. Several transports and storeships, which had taken refuge up a creek, were also given to the flames... Russel's detailed dispatch, describing the affair, and dated from Portsmouth on June 2nd, informed Nottingham that sixteen French men-of-war had been destroyed, and professed to give the names of fourteen of them... French archives show that , in addition to the three ships already mentioned as having been burned near Cherbourg by Delavall, the French lost the following 12 vessels of the line; and there is apparently no ground for supposing that any other craft, except fireships, transports, and storeships, met their fate either during, or as a consequence of the destruction operation."

[86] ●Rooke shifted his flag for the occasion to The EAGLE.

The 10 British ships used as fireships were: The HALF-MOON, The CADIZ MERCHANT, The BLAZE, The THOMAS AND ELIZABETH, The PHAETON, The FOX, The HOPEWELL, The EXTRAVAGANT, The WOLF, The HOUND.

Military Leaders involved ●*English*: Ralph Delavall. ●*French*: Captain Desnos commanded Le SOLEIL-ROYAL.

Military Leaders involved ●18 English vessels. ●3 French damaged vessels.

Strategy or tactics: Attack of three beached ships. The least fort would have easily kept the English squadron at bay. Cherbourg's fortifications were, at that time, non-existent. Four years earlier, in 1688, Vauban had begun to fortify Cherbourg, but Louvois had the fortifications demolished "to give grief to M. de Seignelay[87]. As a result, when this English attack occurred, the results were catastrophic. *The bad trick played by Louvois to M. de Seignelay had dramatic consequences for the three crews.*

Summary of the action: After Barfleur, Le SOLEIL-ROYAL, Le TRIOMPHANT and L'ADMIRABLE, somewhat damaged, sailed to Cherbourg. When they learned that a strong squadron was looking for them, they came ashore to avoid falling into enemy hands. But the absence of fortifications left these ships alone to face the English. A few hours after they ran aground, Ralph Delawall attacked the three ships with The S^{T}-ALBANS, The RUBY and two fireboats, supported at some distance by about fifteen ships.

But the response of the onboard artillery of the three beached French ships quickly drove the English back. The next day, June 1, the English squadron returned, but instead of attacking the wrecks directly with large warships, the English launched fire ships escorted by longboats. One of them, the

[87] Quoted by La Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine française*, see *in fine.* This is how the great ones played with the blood and money of the little ones.

HOUND, exploded under the balls of the French artillery. Another one burned on the rocks, but two others, including the well-named BLAZE, managed to set fire to the large warship Le SOLEIL- ROYAL, which was stranded but still firing. It caught fire and exploded, killing part of its crew. The fireboat WOLF set fire to Le TRIOMPHANT; as for L'ADMIRABLE, some boats set fire to it.

As a consequence of this French defeat, the three French ships were burned. The human losses are unknown.

Sources & Readings .●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London. ●Britannia Victrix; or, the Tri-umphs of the Royal Navy, in the late victorious engagement with the French Fleet, May, 1692 [Pindaric patriotic and triumphalist poem] R. Taylor, London. 1692. ●A further Account of the Victory obtained by the English and Dutch Fleet over the French; received by express this morning from Admiral Russel, (Sir Ralph Delavalls, Letter to the Earl of Nottingham, on board the Royal Sovereign near Cherburg, May 22.) Printed in Lon-don, 1692. ●Cherbourg, maritime bastion of the Cotentin, Ed-mond Thin, Condé-sur-Noireau, Corlet, 1990. ●La guerre de Trente Ans, Henri Sacchi, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1991. ●La Roncière, Histoire de la Marine française. ●

Attack on Saint-Vaast-La-Hougue.

Another name: La Hogue.

Date of action: June 2nd, 1692

Location: Cotentin Peninsula, France. Geographic coordinates: latitude 49°36' N and longitude 01° 18' W.

Conflict: War of the League of Augsburg, 1688-1697.

Context: Following the Battle of Barfleur, some French ships had stopped at La Hougue, unfortified because of Louvois. Despite the French victory at Barfleur, some units of the Royal Navy had been damaged, although none of the ships of the line were lost. On the night of 29 to 30 May following the battle of Barfleur, some of Tourville's ships, quite mistreated, separated into several groups; the lightest passed the currents of the Raz Blanchard. The strongest turned back to Saint-Vaast-La-Hougue. Tourville signaled everyone to do as they pleased. With 15 ships, Tourville himself arrived at La Hougue.

Military leaders in command ●Vice-Admiral Tourville. ●English Admiral Russell.

Military Forces involved ●

Strategy or tactics: In 1688, Vauban had begun to fortify Cherbourg, but Louvois who hated him had demolished the works. So when this English attack happened, the results were catastrophic.

As soon as he arrived at La Hougue, Tourville had to put himself under the orders of the Catholic king [of England] dethroned, Jacques II Stuart, refugee in France, and Marshal Bellefonds, who commanded the land troops. The multiplicity of commands probably explains the hesitations of Admiral Tourville[88].

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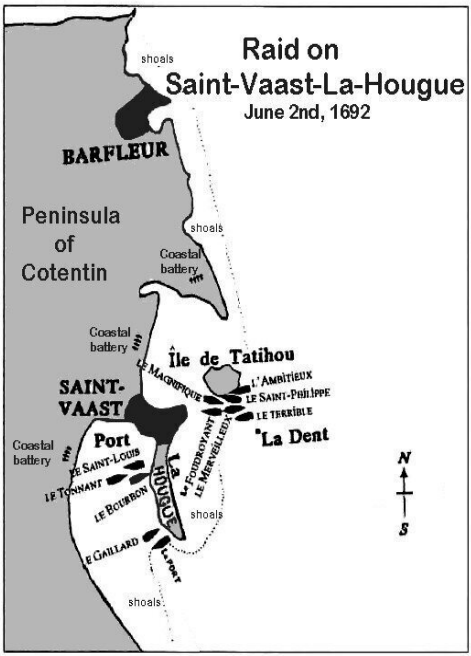
[88] ●On the danger of the multiplicity of leaders, read *Nicholas Machiavelli's Discourse on the 1st Decade of Tite Live* [1469-1,529]: "*It is better to charge an expedition with a*

Tourville [15 vessels] arrived on the evening of 31 May at Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue and anchored his ships next to the two left by Nesmond, behind Le Crocq de Quinevile [a sandbank]. The day of the 1st was lost in hesitation about the lead to hold, with so few ships and no fortification to shelter, in the face of an imminent attack by the Anglo-Dutch [Russell's 40 ships of the line]. Indeed, on landfall, Tourville officially passed under the command of James II –dethroned king of England– and Marshal de Bellefonds.



Finally, it was decided to run aground six ships behind Le Crocq de Quineville[89] and six under the islet of Tatihou[90]. The ships were unloaded from their cargo in anticipation of probable destruction. The whole thing was executed in a great disorder. Marshal de Bellefonds, who had promised 150 armed longboats, actually provided only a dozen.

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single man endowed with an ordinary ability, than to entrust it to two superior men invested with equal authority."

[89] ●Le SAINT-LOUIS 56, Le TONNANT 70, Le BOURBON 66, Le GAILLARD, Le FIER 68, and Le FORT 52,

[90] ● LE TERRIBLE 74, LE MERVEILLEUX 92, LE TONNANT 70, L'AMBITIEUX 92, LE SAINT-PHILIPPE 80, & LE MAGNIFIQUE 76

On the morning of June 2, the flotilla of English boats detached itself from the fleet anchored offshore, and opened the six ships stranded under the islet of Tatihou. The English burned them at leisure, *without the French garrison of the islet* [Army], *badly commanded, reacting*.

On the morning of June 3, more than 200 English longboats returned with the wave, dragging fires. This time, sailors, led by Admiral Tourville, decided to resist. They stopped and repulsed the first wave. Some English canoes were sunk by an improvised coastal battery. But the English still managed to burn the six ships stranded behind Le Crocq de Quineville. Marshal de Bellefonds' negligence meant that the army attended the battle without taking part.

Finally, the English longboats withdrew when the ebbing tide, jusant, threatened them with stranding.

Casualties & Losses ●Tourville lost his 15 damaged and stranded ships: Le SAINT-LOUIS 56, Le TONNANT 70, Le BOURBON 66, Le GAILLARD, Le FIER 68, and Le FORT 52, Le TERRIBLE 74, Le MERVEILLEUX 92, Le TONNANT 70, L'AMBITIEUX 92, Le SAINT-PHILIPPE 80, and Le MAGNIFIQUE 76. The British sea historian wrote that "Russell's detailed dispatch, describing the affair, and dated from Portsmouth on June 2nd, informed Nottingham that sixteen French men-of-war had been destroyed, and professed to give the names of fourteen of them. The Commander-in-Chief seems to have been mistaken both as regards the number and as regards many of the names. Papers in French archives show that, in addition to the three ships already mentioned as having been destroyed near Cherbourg by Delavall, the French lost the following twelve vessels of the line; and there is apparently no ground for supposing that any other craft, except fireships, transport, and storeships, met their fate either during, or as a consequence of, the sux days' operations[91]."

[91] ●Clowes, Vol.II, p356.

Consequence of this French defeat: This destruction darkened a little the joy that the French had felt at the announcement of the great victory of Barfleur and threw a little balm on the anger of the Anglo-Dutch who, since then, call Barfleur's Battle, *The Battle of The Hogue*, in order to soften the bitterness of this battle which they now present as a victory.

Let's finish with this remark by the British Historian William Clowes: "Tourville and his captains had made a most gallant defense, and indeed, done wonders, seeing that, when night fell after the battle of Cape Barfleur on May 19th, the French had not lost a single ship. *Had Barfleur had no morrow, the action would have been a French triumph*; for,... the French fought from beginning to end against enormously superior forces."

Sources & Readings ●Chroniques de La Hougue, T. I: La guerre de la Ligue d'Augsbourg et la fin du Grand Règne, 1688-1715, Vol. II: La bataille de La Hougue, récits, études et réflexions Roger Lepelley, Versailles (1 5 la Roseraie, 78000), R. Lepelley, 1992. ●Corsairs of Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue so us l'Empire, by Jean-François Détre , Publication Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue, Musée maritime de l'île Tatihou, 1998. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, in Six Volumes, vol. V. Sampson Low, Marston & Co. 1900, London. ●Histoire de Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue pendant les mille années (24 juillet 1889), Saint-Vaast-Ia-Hougue [France], 1889. ●History of Saint-Vast-la-Hougue, former stronghold of the abbey of Fécamp, by Jules Leroux. .. (July 1897), Publication Fécamp, Impr. de M.-L. Durand, 1897. ●Parish of Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue, Abbot Ch.-M. Maillard. Speech delivered on... August 27, 1911 before Calvary on the occasion of the procession commmorative of the cessation of cholera, Publication Coutances, Impr. Notre-Dame, 1911.

Naval battle of Lagos.

Date of action: 27 June 1693.

Location: Off Cape Lagos, southern Portugal[92] 1 . Geographical coordinates: 37°06' N, 08°40' W.

Conflict: War of the League of Augsburg, 1688-1697.

Context: This attack was carried out by Tourville in retaliation against Rooke who had just attacked Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue. Tourville's and d'Estrées' divisions, totalizing 71 ships, came upon a convoy of 400 merchant ships escorted by Rooke[93], the same man who had attacked La Hougue.

Military Leader in attendance ●*French*: Admirals Anne Hilarion de Tourville and d'Estrées. ●*English*: Admiral Sir George Rook and Dutch Admiral Ogilips van der Goes.

Military Forces involved ●The English escort consisted of 21 warships of the Royal Navy and from the Nederland. The 400 merchant ships were all armed with artillery. ● The French concentrated 17 ships against the English and Dutch escort, while several frigates and smaller ships of all sizes attacked the 400 armed merchantmen.

Strategy or tactics ●The French plan was for the Brest [Tourville] and Toulon [d'Estrées] squadrons to join up near Gibraltar to guard the trade of England and the United Provinces. ●The English plan was that 21 ships of the line with a great number of frigates and other smaller vessels should concentrate in the Channel under Admiral Killigrew and Admiral Delavall to escort the Smyrna Convoy.

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[92] ●The British also called this battle the *'Smyrna Convoy Disaster'*. Smyrna is the ancient Greek name for the port (now Turkish) of Izmir on the Aegean Sea, where large international fairs were held.

[93] ●Including 140 big ships.

Naval Battle of Lagos, 1693	
ROYAL NAVY & Allies	**MARINE NATIONALE**
1-ROYAL OAK 64, v/a Rooke 2-BREDA 62, r/a Hopsoun 3-MONMOUTH 58, Peter Pickard 4-LUMLEY CASTLE 56, G. Meester 5-MONCK 52, Stafford Fairborne 6-LION 52, Capt. Thomas Gardner 7-LOYAL MERCHANT 50, P. Harris 8-PRINCESS ANNE 48, W. Wakelin 9-TIGER PRIZE 48, R. Sincock 10-WOOLWICH 46, C. Myngs 11-NEWCASTLE 46, J. Baker 12-CHATHAM 44, J. Leader 13-SMYRNA FACTOR 40, Littleton 14-ADMIRAAL-GENERAAL 84, 15-GELDERLAND 72, A. Stilte 16-ZEELAND 64, Ph. Schrijver 17-WAPEN-VANMEDEMBLIK64, J P 18-OOST-STELLINGWERS 52 19-NIJMEGEN 50, 20-SCHIEDAM 50, W. van Rechteren 21-WAPENvandeSCHERMER 44,	1-Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL 104, 2-Le SOLEIL ROYAL 104, 3-Le VICTORIEUX 94, 4- Le MERVEILLEUX 100, 5-Le TERRIBLE 100, 6-L'ADMIRABLE 96, 7-L'AMBITIEUX 92, 8-Le FORMIDABLE 90, Nesmond 9-L'ORGUEILLEUX 88, 10-Le MAGNIFIQUE 86, Galissonnière 11-Le VAINQUEUR 84, 12-L'INTRÉPIDE 82, 13-Le SOUVERAIN 84, 14-Le CONQUÉRANT 84, Chalard 15-Le MAGNANIME 76, 16-Le GRAND 70, 17-Le TÉMÉRAIRE 52,
Frigates & others: SHEERNESS 28, LARK 16, SALAMANDER 10, SUSANNA, DISPATCH, SPEEDWELL, VULTURE, MUSCOVIA + 2 fireships...	Frigates & others: L'ALCYON

Source : William Laird Clowes, vol.II

They were to escort it for a time and then hand it over to Admiral Rooke with 21 ships of the line to sail into the Mediterranean.

Summary of the action: In the spring, therefore, the great convoy and escort assembled in the Thames and Texel; at least 400 ships with cargoes totaling millions of sterling pounds. The Amsterdam convoy joined up at the end of April and the Zeeland convoy in May. In June, therefore, this huge convoy left the chalky cliffs of England.

Like a wolf on the lookout, Tourville was already on the lookout for the Gibraltar bottleneck. The English thought he

was in Brest. Some 300 km further south, after Ushant, the English admirals handed over to Admiral Sir George Rooke who continued towards the Straits of Gibraltar with the 400 English, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Hamburg and Flemish ships.

On 17 June, Rooke's patrol boats spotted a French warship, the CHATHAM[94] 3 , off Cape St Vincent. On the morning of the 18th, the convoy was close to the coast, off the Portuguese town of Villanova. The wind dropped and ten French sails managed to attack and set fire to the merchants.

All the merchants were then armed with artillery, so interceptions of this kind were never without a fight. The French therefore did not neglect the arming of the transports and decided to concentrate only 16 ships against the escort of 20 warships of the Royal Navy

Towards noon, the breeze picked up from the west-northwest and the English squadron began to take shape along the Portuguese coast of the Algarve. It was then that the 71 ships of Tourville and Estrées appeared.

In spite of these imposing forces, only 16 French ships [as expected] allowed themselves to be carried towards the 20-ship Royal Navy and the United Provinces Navy, in three divisions: the Blue with the Admiral and Vice-Admiral and the White with the Rear Admiral. The Vice-Admiral of the White remained offshore to attack the convoy.

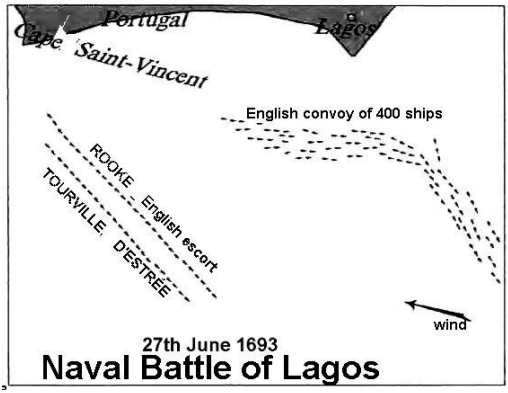
By 3:00pm the French were only four nautical miles from the English. The English admiral immediately sent Le SHEERNESS to warn the merchant ships, which were sailing close to the coast, to take refuge in the ports of Portugal and Spain[95] or to flee.

The Count of Tourville, with 16 ships, threw himself in pursuit of the English protection squadron, which, paradoxically, had set all sail to get off as quickly as possible. At about

[94] ●An English prize of 50 guns.
[95] Faro, Cadiz or San Lucar.

6:00 p.m., he found himself to leeward. Finally three Dutch warships decided to sacrifice themselves to save the convoy. Two of them were commanded by captains Schryver and Vander Poel. For five hours the brave Dutch fought six or seven French ships and then managed to turn and stall. The English and Dutch merchant ships sailed to the coast or northwards with English warships.

The English admiral stayed at sea all night in a north-westerly wind and on Sunday morning several warships could be seen around him, but only 54 of the 400 merchant ships. With these survivors, the English admiral finally arrived at Madeira and from there sailed for Ireland. But more than 350 of the ships he had were scattered across the ocean. Some reached Ireland, some La Coruña, some Cadiz and some Lisbon; many were captured by the French and others destroyed. Seven of the largest ships fell into the hands of Monsieur de Coëtlogon and four others were sunk by him in the bay of Gibraltar.



In Gibraltar harbour, some English frigate-type warships were scuttled[96] by their own crews to prevent them from falling into French hands.

Casualties & Losses ● The French captured and burnt 92 ships[97] not to mention two escort warships. Others perished under the blows of Malaga's batteries. The losses for England, Holland and Northern Europe were immense.

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[96] ●Scuttling is the action of opening the ports in order to voluntarily sink the ship.
[97] ●According to William Laird Clowes, *The Royal Navy*, vol.2, p.359.

Consequence of this English defeat: When the news of this catastrophe reached London, it was a total desolation and dismay. It was indeed a death sentence for many shipowners. Tourville had his revenge on Cherbourg and Saint-Vaast-La-Hougue. Clows wrote, vol.2, p.359, "The amount of damage done by the enemy was presently found to be extremely serious."

Sources & Readings ●Histoire du maréchal de Tourville. lieutenant general of the French navy under the reign of Louis XIV, H, Du Maureix, Ardant frères, Limoges, 1877. ●Tourville, or the French navy under Louis XIV, Frédéric Kœnig, A. Mame et fils, Tours, 1880. ●The journal of Sir George Rooke, Admiral of the Fleet, 1700-1702, introduced by Oscar Browning, Publications of the Navy Records Society, vol. 9, London, 1897. ●The Great Men of France [...} Sailors. [...] Du Quesne. Tourville, Edouard GŒPP and Henri de Mannoury d'Ectot, Paris, 1875. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London.

Naval Battle of St. John's River.

Date of action: August 3rd, 1696.

Location: Acadia, New France. Today's New Brunswick. Geographic coordinates: latitude 45° 53' N, longitude 67°25' W.

Conflict: War of the League of Augsburg, 1688-1697-

Background: The expedition against Fort Pemaquid, led by the French-Canadian Knight d'Iberville, included L'ENVIEUX and Le PROFOND. On June 27, 1,696, the flotilla arrived at Spanish Bay[98]. There d'Iberville found 30 Indians who delivered him a message from Villebon, governor of Acadia, warning him that English vessels had ambushed him in the Saint John River. Each year, only one ship made the France-Acadia connection and the English squadron, not knowing that that year the ship was not alone, decided to intercept and attack it. D'Iberville decided to go and meet them in order to play a bad trick on them.

Military leaders in command ●*French*: Le Moyne d'Iberville[99]. ●*British*: unknown.

Military Forces involved ●Two small French corvette ships. ●Three English ships: two frigates and a brigantine.

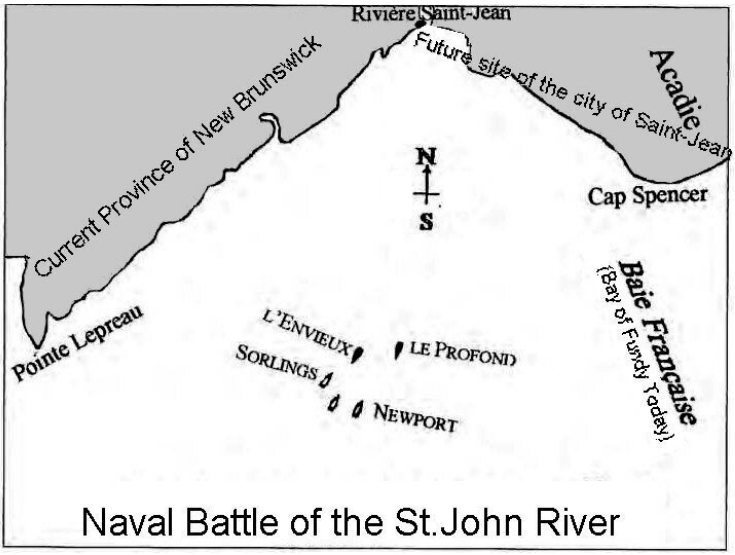
Strategy or tactics: Cannonades and musketry fire.

Summary of the battle On July 24, after embarking 24 Abenaki Indians, water and wood, the two French ships left the Baie des Espagnols and stopped, on August 3, 35 km from the Saint John River. The mist began to dissipate around noon.

At 14:00. the weather was clear. It was then that the two warships and the English brigantine were sighted, 25 km away, heading straight for the two Frenchmen. In order to give the

[98] ●Current site in Sidney, Nova Scotia.
[99] ●Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, French sailor and explorer born in Ville-Marie, now Montreal [1661-1706]. Founder of the colony of Louisiana in 1699.

change, D'Iberville ordered Bonaventure, who commanded Le PROFOND, to hoist the English flag and close its ports as if it were a catch. D'Iberville then set off on the English ships: The NEWPORT [24-gun frigate] headed for L'ENVIEUX while the SORLINGS [36 guns] threw itself on Le PROFOND to take it back from its "capture crew". But within rifle range, Bonaven-



ture hoisted the French flame and unmasked his batteries to send a whole line of cannonballs into the sides of the SORLINGS, while his sailors swept the deck of the same ship with a musketry discharge. The SORLINGS, seeing the danger, then sought refuge in the Saint John River, but blocked by D'Iberville, who turned his flank batteries against him, he fled to the open sea.

The NEWPORT also tried to take off, but L'ENVIEUX was in pursuit and the frigate capitulated just as the French were preparing to board. After which, D'Iberville went in pursuit of The SORL1NGS and at about 5:00 p.m., caught up with it. The cannonade began, but night soon fell and the Englishman

managed to put the darkness to profit to escape. The next day, D'Ibervilprepared to attack the F ort-Pemaquid.

Casualties & Losses ●The British lost two ships on the ground. The loss of life is unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: The English ambush was short-lived and D'Iberville arrived safely. The siege of Pemaquid could take place in good conditions for the French,

Sources & Readings ●Lemoyne d'Iberville, Soldier of New France, par Nellis M. Crouse, Ryerson Press Toronto, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1954. ●The Winter Campaign of Pierre LeMoyne d'Iberville across the Avalon Peninsula 1696-1697, par Terence Kelleher, Maritime History Group, St. Johns NL, 1973. ●Histoire du chevalier d'Iberville, 1663-1706, par Adam Charles Gustave Desmazures J.M. Valois, Montréal, 1890. ●Les Machabées de la Nouvelle- France : histoire d'une famille canadienne, 1641 -1763, Joseph Marmette, Montréal, Librairie Beauchemin, 1925. ●Voyage d'Iberville, journal du voyage fait par deux frigates du roi, "La Badine", commanded by M. d'Iberville and "Le Marin", par M.E. chevalier de Surgeres who left Brest on Friday, October 24, 1698, or they had released, having left Larochelle the previous September 5, Montreal, E. Senécal, 1871. ●The Pelican and Early Canadian History, Montreal. ● D'Iberville ou Le Jean-Bart canadien et la baie d'Hudson, Montréal, 1868. Attributed to François Daniel - Canadiana 1867- 1900. ●Histoire du Chevalier d'Iberville, 1663-1706, Montréal, J.M. Valois, 1890. ●Le Chevalier des Mers: Pierre Lemoyne D'iverville, Pascal Porvin, Québec, l'Action Catholique, 1934. ●Iberville le conquérant, Guy Frégault, Montréal, Société des éditions Pascal, 1944. ●Le chevalier Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'Iberville, by Louis Le Jeunem, Ottawa, Les Editions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1937. ●D'Iberville and the conquest of New England, by L.-O. David, Montreal: Beauchemin, 1926. Le Moyne d'Iberville, Pierre, 1661-1706, Les Normands au Canada. Journal d'une expédition de D'Iberville, Auguste-Honoré Gosselin, Evreux, 1900. ●Father Boudoi

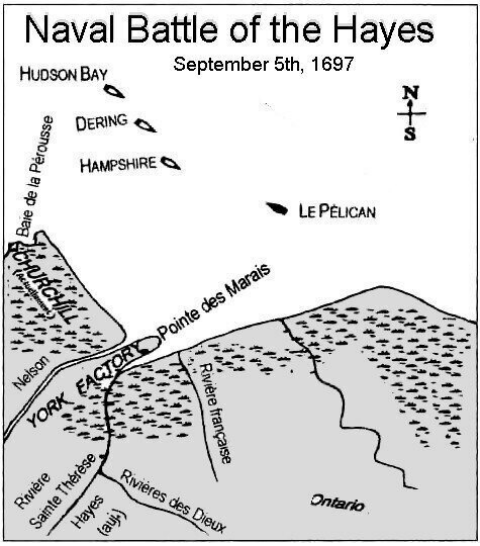
n's War: D'Iberville's Campaigns in Acadia and Newfoundland, 1696, 1697, by Alan F. Williams, Alan G. Maepherson, St. John's, Depar t ment of Geography, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1987. ●D'Iberville's Campaign against the English in Newfoundland, 1696-1697, by Terence Kelleher, St. Johns. Nfld, Maritime History Group, University of Newfoundland Memorial, 1973.

Battle of Hayes River.

Date of action: 5 September 1697.

Location: Hudson Bay, now in the province of Manitoba, Canada. Geographical coordinates: Latitude 57 02' North, Longitude 92° 20' West.

Conflict: End of the League of Augsburg War, 1688-1697.

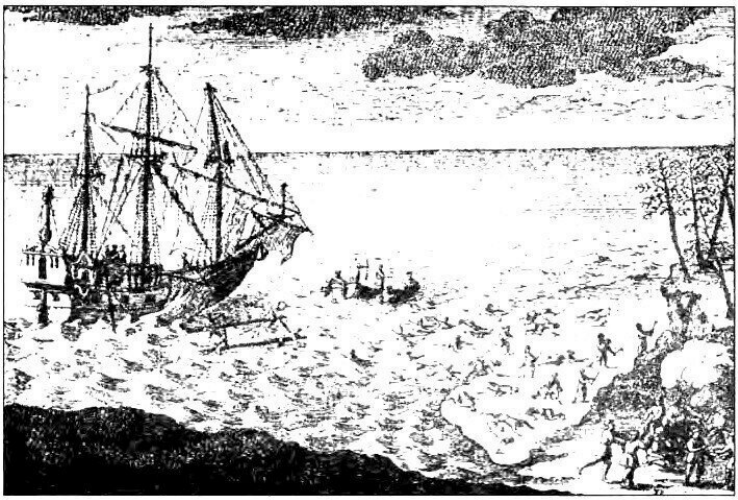


Context: After the destruction of the English fisheries in Newfoundland, economic warfare continued in North America with an assault on the English fur-trading forts in Hudson Bay.

Military leaders in command ●Le Moyne d'Ibervillc commanded Le PÉLICAN. ● Captain Fletcher commanded The HAMPSHIRE; Captain Grimmington commanded The DERING and Captain Edgecombe commanded The HUDSON-BAY.

Military Forces involved ● The three British ships had 114 guns. ●The PELICAN had 44 ca-nons and her crew included 40 scorbutics unable to fight. In addition, 27 had passed over to Le PRO-FOND before leaving Plaisance, and 26 others, which had

left on land reconnaissance the evening before, had not yet returned at the time of the battle.

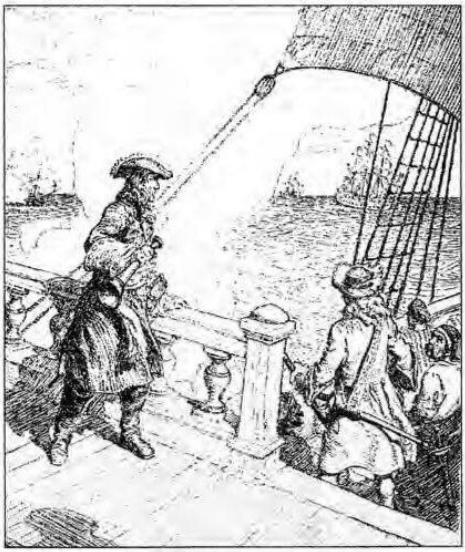


Strategy or tactics: There was no boarding. The battle was fought entirely with guns. It should be noted that, unusually here, the usual tactics of the two antagonists were reversed: the French aimed at the waterline and the English at the masts.

Summary of the action: On 5 November 1697, at dawn, d'Iberville saw three vessels to leeward. He went to meet them thinking he had seen the ships of his squadron that he had lost in the fog, but he soon realised that they were three English warships, the HAMSHIRE [56 guns], the DERING [36 guns] and the HUDSON-BAY [32 guns]. All hell broke loose.

At about 9.30 a.m., the battle began, fiercely. Having learned that d'Iberville was in command of the ship, the English

captains were already looking forward to finally capturing this elusive privateer.



The three English ships arrived in attack formation, the HAMPSHIRE in the lead, followed by the DERING and the HUDSON-BAY. The Pelican rushed at the Hampshire, which had to manoeuvre in cataclysm to avoid the collision. Passing close between the two following ships, the French unleashed a terrible double broadside that riddled their sides. But the big HAMPSHIRE quickly recovered, turned around and began to fire and strafe the Frenchman's mast and deck.

The latter retaliated by concentrating her deadly broadsides on the flotation lines.

This fierce battle lasted three and a half hours. Finally, the HAMPSHIRE, which was taking on water on all sides, began to list heavily and sank rapidly. When the DERING saw this, she gave a last tack, turned luff to luff and ran away under full sail, while the HUDSON BAY brought her flag to indicate that she was surrendering. D'Iberville tried to follow the DERING, but the heavy damage she had received from the HAMPSHIRE prevented her from pursuing her.

The next day, a storm arose. The PELICAN, heavily damaged, sank the next day ten kilometres from the coast. D'iberville had had time to have rafts built which disembarked the

sick, the wounded and the crew. Despite this, 18 soldiers drowned during the rescue.

Casualties & Losses ● The HUDSON-BAY was carrying 50,000 dolars worth of goods which the French took. But the ship itself sank during the storm which also engulfed the PÉLICAN. The DERING and the HAMPSHIRE were carrying 100 reinforcement soldiers for the garrison of Fort Nelson. Those of the HAMPSHIRE were taken prisoner by the French. The human losses in killed and wounded are not well known. We only know that the French, who had not been boarded, had 90 killed and wounded [15 killed and 75 wounded].

Consequence of this English defeat: This victory over the three English warships allowed the French to besiege and take Fort Nelson, the English capital on Hudson Bay. The cruel war of the Augsburg League finally came to an end with the signing of the Peace of Ryswick[100] in September-October 1697.

Sources & Readings ●Le corsaire de la Baie d'Hudson, Eugène Achard, Librairie générale canadienne, Montréal, Librairie d'action catholique, Québec, 1941. ●Iberville le Conquérant, Guy Frégault, Société des Edi-tions Pascal, Montreal, 1944. ●Quand Le Moyne d'Iberville explorait le Mississipi, Albert Krebs, article from "Le Monde français", March 1949. ●La Grande aventure de le Moyne d'Iberville, Pierre Daviault, Éditions de l'A.C.F, Montreal, no date. ●Father Baudouin's War, D'Iber-ville's Campaigns in Acadia and Newfoundland, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St,John's, 1 696. ●Expedition of Le Moyne d'Iberville to Newfoundland (1696), Alan F. Williams, Scientific Editor, Montreal, no date. ●Le Chevalier Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'iber-ville, Le père Louis Le Jeune [oblate of Mary Immaculate], Les Éditions de l'Université d'Ottawa, Ottawa, 1937. ●A Comparative View of French Louisiana, 1699 and 1762: the Journals of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and Jean-Jacques- Blaise d'Abbadie, edition translated and

[100] ●Today Rjjswijk in Low Countries.

annotated by Cari A. Brasseaux, Center for Louisiana Studîes, Univer-sity of Southwcstern Louisiana, Lafayette, 1981. ●Iber-ville's Gulf Journals, Pierre Le Moyne d'iberville, translated from French and edited by Richebourg Gaillard McWilliams, University of Alabama Press, 1981.

Naval Battle of Santa Marta.

Date of action: September 3, 1702.

Location: Santa Marta is the capital of the Magdalena Department in Colombia and the third largest urban center in the Caribbean region after Barranquilla and Cartagena de Indias. This city was founded on July 29, 1525 (feast of Saint Martha) by Rodrigo Galván de las Bastidas. It is the first city built by the Spanish in South America. Geographical coordinates 11º24' and 74º 21'.

Conflict: War of the Spanish Succession 1701-1714.

Background: In January 1702, Vice-Admiral John Benbow's English squadron arrived at Port-Royal from Jamaica. There, Benbow was informed that "the Spanish silver fleet was at Vera Cruz, the tons of gold and silver ready to be embarked, and a French squadron of 12 ships was waiting at Havana to transport it through the Atlantic Ocean. In May, when the silver fleet had not yet sailed, Benbow's squadron was reinforced by that of Rear-Admiral Whetstone. The scum of lawless thieves was actively being prepared.

On 11th July, Benbow left Port-Royal with 12 ships to follow the French Marquis de Coëtlogon charged with protecting the Spanish convoy against English aggression. Six ships were sent to watch Ducasse who was to appear from the coast of the western end of Hispaniola. [Santo Domingo].

On 27 July, the English squadron arrived in the Gulf of Leogan[101], where it found several French ships at anchor near the town of the same name. The English immediately sent a crew to take possession of one of the French ships whose crew was ashore. A "50 guns", also almost unmanned, threw itself ashore so as not to be taken by the English squadron. The next

[101] ●In Saint-Domingue or Santo-Domingo.

morning, a small French merchant of 16 guns was sunk, one of 18, burned under the fort of Léogane and several others, loaded with wine, were taken. The height of blind and absurd obedience: to protect the Spaniards, the French squadron neglected to cover the French ports!

On reaching Cape Dame-Marie[102], at the western end of Hispaniola, Benbow learned that Ducasse was to go to Cartagene and Portobello. On 10 August, he sighted 4 French ships of 60 guns escorting some Spanish galleons.

Military leaders in command: ●*English*: Vice-Admiral John Benbow. ●*French*: lieutenant-general of the king's armies, Jean-Baptiste Ducasse, Gascon of the Dax region.

Military Forces involved ●*French*: 4 warships of 60 guns. ●*English*: 7 large warships: The DEFIANCE [64 guns]; The PENDENNIS [48 guns]; The WINDSOR [60 guns]; The BREDA [70-gun flagship, center]; The GREENWICH [60 guns]; The RUBY [48canons]; The FALMOUTH [48 guns] and some smaller galleys and frigates.

Strategy or tactics: The indiscipline of the English captains, which bordered on mutiny, was undoubtedly one of the causes of this English defeat.

Action Summary: Around 4 p.m., the two wings faced each other. The battle began despite the numerical inferiority of the French who lined up only 4 ships against 7. It was a series of extremely bloody cannonades, musketry fires and collisions that lasted until nightfall. The French remained masters of several ships[103]. Throughout the night, the two squadrons remained face to face. The English admiral had given formal orders to his ships to remain in the line of battle. Several English captains had chosen to go away during the night to repair; and the next day, at daybreak, they stood aside. Vice-Admiral John Benbow

[102] ●Cape Donna-Maria.
[103] ●Galleys and frigates.

found himself on par with the French, who had all stayed and were preparing to renew the battle.

The morning was spent observing each other. Then around 14:00, the English squadron set sail. Admiral Benbow, who only wanted to fight in numerical superiority[104], tried to regroup his ships. In the evening, he had managed to rally his recalcitrant ships and he convened a Council of War which decided not to resume your fight. Despite their numerical inferiority, the arrogant French had followed the English squadron to attack it and recaptured it with cannons; a chain ball[105], sent by the Betrothed, destroyed a leg of the English vice-admiral. This did not prevent him from continuing to lead the battle with great courage. Soon, Captain Richard Kirkley of The DEFIANCE arrived on the flagship The BREDA and suggested that he had better order a stall and retreat. A little further on, four English ships, attacked for a moment by a French vessel, unheeded Benbow's signals to keep the fight going. Not knowing whether his captains had refused the fight out of cowardice or to sacrifice it to the enemy[106], the English admiral decided to stall, too, and withdrew to Port-Royal from Jamaica.

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: unknown. ●*English*: The FALMOUTH, Th e BREDA and The RUBY were heavily damaged.

Consequence of this English defeat: When an English officer expressed regret for the loss of his leg, the English admiral replied indignantly: "I too regret it; But I would have preferred to lose both rather than see this dishonour fall on the British nation! From Cartagena, Admiral Ducasse sent a note to Benbow in these terms: "*Sir, I had a little hope, last Monday, to supper in your cabin, but it pleased God to decide otherwise. Thank*

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[104] ●This is a fundamental rule of the Royal Navy

[105] ●Two cannonballs connected by a chain constituted a very destructive anti-personnel projectile. This type of projectile was also very effective against cordages and wings.

[106] ●The arrogant manner of Admiral Benbow had attracted many enemies.

God. As for your cowardly captains who have deserted, *hang them, by Heaven*, [Sic!] *They deserve it! signed* Ducasse.»

On 6 October, the felon captains were tried at a court martial under Rear-Admiral Whetstone for desertion in the presence of the enemy[107].

Sources & Readings ●An Account of the Proceedings in the West-Indies of' Vice-Admiral Benbo, Admiral of Her Majesty's Ships in the West-Indies, from the 11th Day of july Last, to the Middle of October, With a relation of an engagement between a squadron of Her Majesty's Ships under his command, and a squadron of French under Monsieur Du Casse, near die coast of Santa Martha, from the 21st to the 24th day of August last, Edw. Jones, in the Savoy, 1702. ●An account of the arraignments and tryals of Col. R. Kirkby, Capt. J. Constable, C. Wade, S. Vincent, and C. Fogg, [...] at a court-martial held on board the ship BREDA in Port-Royal harbour, [..,] October, 1702, for cowardice [,..] and other crimes, committed by them in a fight at sea, [...] between [...] J. Benbow and Admiral Du Casse. [...] Transmitted from two eminent merchants at Port-Royal [...] to a person of Quality in [.. .] London, 1703, ●L'amiral Du Casse: l'élévation d'un Gascon sous Louis XIV, Philippe Hrodej, Paris, Librairie de l'Inde, 1999. ●Jugement rendu par le Conseil de guerre Extraordinaire de Marine, tenu à Lorient par ordre du roi. (Au sujet des accusations portées contre plusieurs officiers supérieurs ayant pris part au combat naval de la Dominique [21 mai 1784], Lorient; imp . de L.-C.-R. Baudoin, no date.

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[107] ●Captains Vincent [of FALMOUTH], Fogg [of BREDA] and Walton [of RUBY] were acquitted. Captains Kirkland and Wade [of DEFIANCE and GREENW1CH] were sentenced to death, but the sentence was suspended until they arrived at Plymouth where they were shot on the deck of BRISTOL by a platoon of marines without being able to disembark. Supreme punishment! Captain Constable (of the WINDSOR) was put in a cell for an indefinite time at the pleasure of the good Queen Anne. Captain Hudson committed suicide shortly before the trial which would undoubtedly have sentenced him to death. Benbow died soon after, probably of gangrene. All the executed captains were commoners. As in France, the aristocrats would have been protected by their powerful families.

Naval battle of Vigo.

Date of the action: 22 October 1702.

Location: The Bay of Vigo, or *Anseada de Rande*, is located in Galicia, in the northwest of Spain. Geographical co-ordinates: 42° 28' north latitude and 08°65' west longitude. The pier was located at the level of the present-day Rande Bridge, which serves as a link to Highway 9 or E1 (Atlantic Highway).

Conflict: War of the Spanish Succession, 1701-1714.

Background: The Anglo-Dutch [1000 men], led by the Duke of Ormonde and Admiral Sir George Rooke, were returning from Cadiz, where they had been defeated[108], when they came upon the Spanish Silver or Gold Fleet escorted by French ships at Vigo. This fleet, which Châteaurenault was flanking with 30 ships of the line, had arrived from the West Indies and had taken refuge in the cul-de-sac of the Bay of Vigo, as it had been unable to enter Pasajes or Cadiz, which the Anglo-Dutch were supposed to be blockading. The Spaniards had refused to take refuge in France, in Brest or La Rochelle, for fear that their precious metal would fall into the hands of the French, their allies. This gold, stolen from the Andean Indians, would still be stolen from them, but by their enemies.

For the greater good of the London Merchant Lobbies, this immense fortune in *doubloons*[109] was to unleash an

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[108] See the siege of Cadiz, 12th August – 15th September 1702, and the Battle of Velez Malaga.

[109] ●The coins of 8, in Spanish doblón de ocho [doublon de 8 in French and doubloon in English], were worth 8 gold ecus. They weighed 27 grams [almost an ounce of gold]. They were worth 4 pistols, which is 16 silver dollars. One of the first coins of this type was made in 1519 in the St. Joachim Valley in Bohemia (thal = valley). The word *thaler*, *daler* or *dollar* was eventually adopted by the young American republic to designate its currency. In fact, the $ sign did not represent an S but a stylised 8 crossed by the two columns of Hercules [Gibraltar in Spain and Ceuta in Morocco], which symbolized strength.

irresistible Anglo-Dutch frenzy towards Vigo, and a hecatomb of 9,000 French killed, wounded or captured and 900 Anglo-Dutch. On 22 October, the Anglo-Dutch cadre arrived in the area on intelligence. The French also lost an entire fleet: 15 ships, 3 frigates, 3 corvettes and 968 cannons.

Leaders in command ● Admiral Sir George Rooke and Vice Admiral Thomas Hopsonn; the Duke of Ormande commanded the landing troops. ● Admiral de Châteaurenault led the French escort.

Military Forces involved ●The French escort that was engaged in the battle consisted of 15 warships[110]. ●The combined Anglo-Dutch fleet totaled 145 sails including 90 warships[111] and 15,000 landing troops.

Strategy or tactics: Châteaurenault had 15 warships stationed across Vigo Bay, anchored in a convex line from one side of the the bay. A second line of defense was formed by a boom made up of masts, chains and barrels anchored and moored at both ends to two large 70-gun ships, L'ESPÉRANCE and Le BOURBON. This double line of defence was flanked, on both banks, by the forts of Corbeyron [to the north] and the Tour-de-Pierre [to the south]. The galleons and the rest of the escorting squadron stood behind these lines. The captain of an English ship had learned from the overly talkative French Consul in Lagos[112] that the *flota plata*[113] was coming. Vigo was, along with Sluis (L'Écluse or Lécluse), La Hougue and Aboukir, a battle which the French lost for fighting at anchor, at anchor, in a static chained position. With the exception of Trafalgar, it seems that it was against immobilized French fleets that the English achieved their greatest naval victories.

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[110] ●Seventy large ships armed with 99, 60, 70 or 40 guns and 70 frigates of 35 guns and less.
[111] ●The 15 others had been left behind the line of defense.
[112] ●South of Portugal. History has not remembered the name of this man who was responsible for the death of 10,000 men.
[113] ●The Silver Fleet.

The social hierarchy that was superimposed on the military hierarchy within the French Royal Navy tended to be detrimental to the good of the service. On this subject, Hardy de Périni quotes a text by Maurice Lot: "The admiral was, since 1669, a prince of the blood who, like the count of Toulouse, reported only to the king. The vice-admirals [924,000 livres of pay] could be made marshals of France [Estrées, Châ-teau-renault] after an exploit at sea; the lieutenant-generals of the naval armies [12,000 livres] and the squadron commanders [6,000 livres], assimilated to the marshals of camp, completed the framework of the General Staff.

The captains of ships [3000 livres] and frigates [2500 livres], lieutenants [2500 livres] and ensigns [800 livres] were blue officers, cadets of great families or poor gentlemen. They were recruited into the companies of the Guards of the Navy or the Guards of the Flag, where one could only enter after having proved one's nobility. The red officers, capitaines de flute and lieutenants de frigate, were of commoner and recruited from the officers of the merchant navy or the valiant privateers... There was an unbridgeable demarcation between the two origins; Jean Bart, called by the king to Versailles after his legendary exploits, received nothing but jeers and affronts from the noble courtiers. The spirit of caste in the Navy... was detrimental to the good of the service. This detestable feeling still exists in the Marine Nationale[114] at the beginning of the 21st Century.

As the narrowness of the pass of the Vigo fjord did not permit a general engagement of the two fleets, Rooke left the 30 Anglo-Dutch ships and fire ships of Vice-Admiral Thomas Hopsonn's [The TORBAY] to lead the assault.

Summary of the action: Troops were landed on the morning of the 22nd on both shores [Duke of Ormonde]. They advanced at the same time as the naval attack and stormed the Spanish works which covered the southern end of the estacade. Similarly, on

[114] ●Still called "*La Royale*".

the north bank, the Anglo-Dutch assault troops took the Corbeyron pier defended by Manuel de Velasco, general of the galleons. The allied fleet - The TORBAY in the lead - rushed against the French lines, but soon, lacking wind, it stopped and dropped anchor to avoid drifting. The TORBAY, the flagship of the attackers, was immediately bombarded by Le BOURBON and by L'ESPÉRANCE, while a fire ship was launched against her but without success. Finally, suffering severe damage, she was rescued by the ASSOCIATION [90 guns] which had until then been used as fire support for the troops landed on the north shore. Hopsonn transferred his mark to The MONMOUTH. The other Allied ships immediately attacked the boom and succeeded in driving it through the defenders[115]. L'ESPÉRANCE [commander. La Galissonnière] had to go ashore. It was a bad omen. Meanwhile, facing the powerful Dutch ship The ZEVEN PROVINCIEN [admiral van der Gœs], Le BOURBON fought for a long time, but finally succumbed.

Châteaurenault's French squadron could not manoeuvre and had to be content with fighting at anchor; for the westerly wind, which had picked up again, favoured the attackers and, on the contrary, forbade the French any offensive manoeuvre. Only the ships that had been anchored close to the barrage were actually able to participate in the battle and had to bear the full brunt of the Allied assault.

So much so that some French ships[116] 10 emptied their ammunition bunkers completely and found themselves, after half an hour of extremely intense fighting against the Anglo-Dutch, in a most desperate situation. Unwilling to let these now indefensible ships fall into enemy hands, Châteaurenault gave the order to set them on fire. Others fell into the hands of the Anglo-Dutch: Le BOURBON, Le PROMPT, Le FERME, Le MODÉRÉ, L'ASSURÉ and Le TRITON. Three others ran

[115] ●Too few in number.
[116] ●For example, Le FORT, flagship of 76 guns, Le SOLIDE, L'ENTREPRENANT, La DAUPHINE and L'ORIFLAMME.

aground voluntarily in order to avoid capture, the SIREN, the SUPERBE and the VOLUNTEER.

A crowd of Spanish peasants and sailors, hired by the Administration, feverishly unloaded the gold and silver from the galleons to keep them safe. When the Spanish galleons saw their escort wiped out, they began to set themselves on fire so that the enemy could not enjoy the fruits of their victory. And in the burning infernos sank huge fortunes in ingots of precious metal: three quarters of the silver fleet disappeared in the islets of the Vigo fjord, where these treasures still tempt the adventurous imagination of gold seekers who have definitively abandoned the sledgehammer in favour of electronic detectors.

Casualties & Losses ●Châteaurenault lost 15 ships, 3 frigates, 3 corvettes, 968 cannons and 8,000 of his 9,000 men[117], including the many prisoners. Nineteen Spanish galleons were also destroyed. ● The Cadiz and Vigo expedition had cost the Anglo-Dutch 900 men killed or wounded.

As a consequence of this French defeat, Portugal reopened the Portuguese and Brazilian markets to the English. This success allowed Admiral Rooke to restore his reputation after his failures at Cadiz and Velez-Malaga against the French. Despite the fact that most of the treasure was lost in the depths of the sea, considerable amounts of precious metal arrived in England and the Low Countries and caused great joy and no less great ... inflation of the pound.

These heaps of gold did not fail to frustrate the Dutch, who fought like lions but felt they had to take the lion's share during the subsequent division. But the worst were the French, who lost a complete framework to the king, not of Prussia, but of Spain.

Sources & Readings ●A relation of the great and glorious succes of the fleet of her Majesty and the States General at Vigo,

[117] ●Of which 900 were killed or wounded and the others, prisoners.

the land forces being under the command of the Duke d'Ormonde, and the fleet commanded by Sir George Rooke, written by James Butler, second Duke d'Ormonde, published by Edward Jones, London, 1702. ●Les Épaves de l'Or: plongées sur les galions de Vigo, Robert Stenuit, Famot, Genève, 1982. Comment on aurait pu tenter le sauvetage des galions de Vigo, Jean-Baptiste Toselli, P.Cordier, Paris, 1875. An Impartial Account of all the Material Transaction [od the] Grand Fleet and Land Forces from their First Setting out from Spithead June 29 till [...] the duke of Ormon's arrival at Deal, Nov. 7, 1702: in which is included a particular relation of the expedition at Cadiz, and the glorious victory at Vigo, written by an officer during these actions, Publication R. Gibson, London, 1703.

Naval Battle of Velez-Malaga.

Other name: Battle of Malaga.

Date of the action: 24 August 1704.

Location: The aiguade[118] 1 of Velez-Malaga was located some fifteen kilometres to the east of Malaga. Geographical coordinates: 36° 43' north latitude and 04° 13' west longitude.

Conflict: War of the Spanish Succession, 1701-1714.

Context: That year, England had just taken Gibraltar, a strategic point defended by the Spanish admiral Diego de Salinas with 56 soldiers and 100 militia... 56 soldiers and a hundred militiamen. [The Anglo-Dutch took the city at the very beginning of August 1704, officially in the name of King Charles III of Spain, whom the allies supported, but who did not reign. In fact, it was Philip V whom the Treaty of Utrech recognised as the legitimate ruler. In the end, the English kept Gibraltar for themselves. The Count of Toulouse was in Barcelona when he heard the news of this coup de main. He sailed towards the Straits of Gibraltar and was refuelling at the Velez-Malaga point on 22 August when the Anglo-Dutch squadron appeared. Due to the lack of wind and current, the French fleet had to be towed out to sea by the 24 galleys. This was the reason why the battle could not take place until the following day, 24 August.

Military Leaders in command ●*English-Dutch*: Sir George Rooke; Admiral Sir John Leake; Dutch Conrte-Admirals Callenburgh [Calembourg, for the French] and Van der Dussen.

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[118] ●An *aiguade* was a place where ships could get fresh water. It was also the ship's fresh water supply.

●French: Louis Alexandre de Bourbon[119], Comte de Toulouse, Admiral of France[120]; Admirals Langeron and Villette-Mursay.

Military Forces involved ●*Anglo-Dutch fleets*: total 71 ships, including 59 English ships and 12 Dutch buildings, 3,614 guns and 22,453 men. ●*French fleet*: 50 ships [of which the 24 galleys did not participate in the battle], 9 fire ships, 2 floats, 3,522 guns and 24,275 men. Almost the same number of cannons on both sides. Spain, France's ally[121] 3, had no more ships, sailors or arsenals. Its ports were disarmed and deserted. But France had lost nothing of the maritime power that Colbert had built up. She remained master of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic. The French king's squadrons were made up of ships known as "de haut bord" of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th rank, depending on the number of cannons and the number of crew.

Then came the frigates, lighter, less loaded with artillery, squadron scouts; the corvettes transformed into fire ships for boarding; the flutes or gabares, the bomb galleys and, finally, the galleys.

Strategy or tactics: The two fleets formed two parallel lines 2 km long across the east wind[122] 4 . The French to leeward and the Allies to windward.

The English vanguard squadron [Blue Wing] under Admiral Leake faced the Blue and White Wing of Villette-Mursay. In the Allied centre, Admiral Rooke's English Red Wing opposed the White Wing of the Count of Toulouse. Admiral Callenburgh's Anglo-Dutch rear-guard squadron faced the Frenchman Langeron who commanded the Blue Squadron. The

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[119] ●Louis Alexandre de Bourbon was probably a bastard son of Louis XIV. He was born in 1678 to Françoise de Mortemart, who was one of Louis XIV's mistresses at the time. Like all children supposedly born of the royal seed, he received a title of nobility. The king granted him the title of Comte de Toulouse. Louis became an admiral of France.

[120] ●The word admiral, itself, comes from the Arabic Emir al Ma, maritime chief [Al is the article and *Ma* is water or sea] like *mer*.

[121] ●According to Hardy de Périni, Spain was torn by this civil war between two foreign kings who were coveting its throne.

[122] ●Perpendicular to the wind.

French galleys were posted in the second line, downwind of the French line. They did not intervene in the battle.

This battle was the largest pitched battle, in terms of numbers, of the War of Spanish Succession. The last one too. It can be compared to the Battle of Jutland, which was a tactical victory for the Germans[123] but, paradoxically, a strategic defeat, since the German High Seas Fleet no longer dared to venture into the North Sea. It was a Pyrrhic victory.

French Admiral Toulouse, who had fired 102,886 cannon shots (!), was unaware that the Anglo-Dutch were out of ammunition and did not pursue. The English had only ten shots left per gun on average. Leake himself had only three for the high battery and none for the others. Had Toulouse continued, he would easily have destroyed the English fleet to the last ship.

Summary of the action: On 24 August at about 10:00 am, the two fleets came up in parallel formation. In the vanguard, it was initially a race between the two leading squadrons. The British front guard being detached from the Centre, Villette-Mursay tried to overtake Leake, then the two lines came closer and the gun-nade began, particularly dense at the level of the Le Roux Saint-Aubin d'Infreville division. Le Roux's SAINT-PHILIPPE shot down a hundred men on The PRINCE [Leake], while the lead ship, L'ÉCLATANT, forced The YARMOUTH to retreat out of the battle line.

A bloody battle also ensued between The BAR-FLEUR [Admiral Shovell] and L'INTRÉPIDE [du Casse]. Le FIER [Admiral Villette-Mursay] damaged three or four British ships before being hit by a bomb which blew up her stern and started a fire.

Le FIER, which had lost 200 men, of whom a hundred were killed, had to leave her battle station to fight the fire. Le MAGNIFIQUE, also badly damaged, called in two galleys to tow her out of the battle lines. Admiral Shovell was unable to

[123] ●These inflicted enormous losses on the English.

take advantage of the vacuum created to infiltrate and envelop the French vanguard.

Bataille Navale de Velez-Malaga	
MARINE ROYALE	**ANGLO-DUTCH NAVIES**
VG 1-L'ÉCLATANT 66, Capt Bellefontaine	**VAN** 1-6, PRINCE-GEORGE 96, v/a Leake
2-L'ÉOLE 62, Capt. Demons	2-The NEWARK 80, Capt Richard Clarke
3-L'ORIFLAMME 62, Capt Châteaurenault	3-BOYNE 80, Capt James Berkeley
4-Le SAINT-PHILIPPE 92, c/e d'Infreville	4-NORFOLK 80, Capt John Knapp
5-L'HEUREUX 72, Capt Colbert-Saint-Mars	5-YARMOUTH 70, Capt Jasper Hicks
6-Le RUBIS 56, Capt de Benneville	6-BERWICK 70, Capt Robert Fairfax
7-L'ARROGANT 56, Capt de l'Estenduère	7-NAMUR 96, Capt Christopher Myngs
8-Le MARQUIS 56, Capt Patoulet	8-BARFLEUR 96, adm Cloudesley Shovell
9-Le CONSTANT 68, Capt d'Augé	9-WARSPITE 70, Capt Edmond Loades
10-Le FIER 90, Capt v/a Villette-Mursay	10-OXFORD 70, Capt John Norris
CB 11-L'INTRÉPIDE 84, Capt Ducasse	11-SWIFTSURE 70, Capt Robert Wynn
12-L'EXCELLENT 60, Capt La Roche-Allard	12-LENNOX 70, Capt William Jumper
13-Le SAGE 58, Capt Monbault	13-ASSURANCE 66, Capt Robert Hancock
14-L'ÉCUEIL 68, Capt d'Arigny	14-NOTTINGHAM 60, Capt Sam. Whitaker
15-LE MAGNIFIQUE 90, c/e Belle-Isle E.	15-TILBURY 50, Capt George Delaval
16-Le MONARQUE 84, Capt Chabert	**BC** 16-ROYAL-CATHERINE 90, adm Rooke
17-Le FURIEUX 58, Capt de Blénac	17-ST-GEORGE 96, Capt John Jennings
18-LE VERMANDOIS 60, Capt de Béthune	17-SHREWBURY 80, Capt Josias Crowe
19-Le PARFAIT 74, Capt Châteaumorand	19-GRAFTON 70, Capt Andrew Leake
20-Le TONNANT 90, Capt de Coëtlogon	20-NASSAU 70, Capt Francis Dove
21-L'ORGUEILLEUX 72, Capt de Beaussier	21-EAGLE 70, Capt Archibald Hamilton
22-Le MERCURE 50, Capt de Lannéon	22-MONMOUTH 70, Capt John Baker
23-Le SÉRIEUX 60, Capt Champmeslin	23-MONTAGU 60, Capt William Clevland
24-Le FLEURON 54, Capt de Grancey	24-PANTHER 50, Capt Peregrine Bertie
25-Le VAINQUEUR 86, c/e d'Armagnac	25-KENT 70, rear/adm Thomas Dilkes
26-Le FOUDROYANT 104, adm Toulouse	26-CAMBRIDGE 80, Capt Richard Lestock
27-Le TERRIBLE 102, Capt de Relingues	27-ROYAL OAK 76 Capt Gerard Elwes
28-L'ENTREPRENANT 58, Capt Hautefort	28-BEDFORD 70, Capt Kerryll Roffey
29-LE FORTUNÉ 54, Capt de Bagneux	29-SUFFOLK 70, Capt Robert Kirkton
30-Le HENRI 66, Capt d'Aché de Serquigny	30-BURFORD 70, Capt Kerryll Roffey
31-Le MAGNANIME 74, c/e de Pointis	31-MONCK 60, Capt James Mighells
32-Le LYS 88, Capt de Villars	32-SWALLOW 50, Capt Richard Haddock
33-Le SCEPTRE 84, Capt d'Ailly	33-RANELAGH 80, rear/adm George Byng
34-Le FENDANT 58, Capt de La Luzerne	34-SOMERSET 80, Capt John Price
RG 35-Le ZÉLANDE 60, de Serville	35-DORSETSHIRE 80, Capt Ed. Whitaker
36-Le SAINT-LOUIS, Capt de Beaujeu	36-TORBAY 80, Capt William Caldwell
37-L'ADMIRABLE 92, c/e de Sepville	37-ESSEX 70, Capt John Hubbard
38-La COURONNE 76, Capt de Champigny	38-FERME 70, Capt Baron Wyld
39-Le CHEVAL-MARIN 44, Capt de Pontac	39-KINGSTON 60, Capt Edward Acton
40-Le DIAMANT 58, Capt Darogne	40-TRITON 50, Capt Tudor Trevor
41-Le GAILLARD 54, Capt d'Osmond	41-CENTURION 50, Capt John Herne
42-L'INVINCIBLE 68, Capt de Rouvroy	**RG (Dutch)**
43-Le SOLEIL-ROYAL 102, de Langeron	42- ALBEMARLE 64, admiral Callenburgh
44-Le TRIDENT 56, Capt de Modne	43-UNIE 90, vice/admiral van Vassenaer

45-Le CONTENT 60, Capt de Phélypeaux 46-Le MAURE 54, Capt de Sainte-Claire 47-Le TOULON 62, Duquesne-Mosnier 48-Le TRIOMPHANT 92, c/e de la Harteloire 49-Le SAINT-ESPRIT 74, DuquesneGuitton 50-L'ARDENT 64, Capt d'Aligre. **TOTAL 50 ships-of-the-line, 3577 guns, 24,275 men** 24 galleys (*5 of which were Spanish*) 7 frigates : ÉTOILE, HERCULE, GALATÉE, ANDROMÈDE, OISEAU, MÉDUSE, SYBILLE 7 fireships : ENFLAMMÉ, DANGEREUX, TURQUOISE, CROISSANT, BIENVENU, AIGLE-VOLANT, LION 2 flûtes de transport.	44-GELDERLAND 72, Capt. Schrijver 45-DORDRECHT 72, Capt Van der Pot 46-KATWIJK 72, Capt Ockersse 47-WAPENvanVRIESLAND 64 Middagten 48-WAPENvanUTRECHT 64, Capt Bolck 49-BANNIER 54, Capt Van Ghent 50-LEEUW 64, Capt 51-VLISSINGEN 64, Capt 52-NIJMEGEN 54, Capt Lijnslager 53-DAMIATEN 52 Capt **TOTAL 53 ships-of-the-line, 3614 guns, 22,543 men.** 6 frigates: LARKE 40, ROEBUCK 40, CHARLES GALLEY 32, TARTAR 32, NEWPORT 24... 2 bomb galiotes (HARE, TERROR) 7 fireships:firebrand, GRIFFIN, HUNTER, LIGHTNING, PHOENIX, VULCAN, VULTURE HOSPITAL SHIPS: PRINCESS ANNE, JEFFERIES
(	
Abbreviations : VG =Vanguard ; CB= Corps de Bataille ; RG= Rearguard	

Many ships had to leave the line of battle to refresh themselves a little further away.

In the centre, Le FOUDROYANT [104 guns, Count of Toulouse] held up well against the ROYAL CATHERINE [90 guns, Admiral Rooke]. In front of her, Le VAINQUEUR [86 guns, Lorraine-Armagnac, killed during the fight] fought in turn three English ships of 70 guns and destroyed the rigging of a fourth. Le TERRIBLE [de Relingue] forced The EAGLE out of the line of battle and retreated with 64 killed and wounded. In the rear guard [Dutch squadron], Le SOLEIL-ROYAL attacked and disabled Callenburgh's flagship, The ALBEMARLE. By their valiant fighting, the Dutch squadron succeeded in forcing three light ships out of the line.

By 19:00 no ship had flown its flag on either side. It was then, after nine hours of fierce fighting, that Admiral Sir George Rooke gave the signal to retreat. His ships were out of

ammunition. The French ships, on the other hand, still had their powder magazines and their ball bunkers half full. But... the Count of Toulouse was unaware of this English weakness; he had remained master of the battlefield and was satisfied with it.

In order to make it appear that he was fully determined to defend the Rock of Gibraltar dearly, Admiral Rooke remained stationed for a few hours the next day on the horizon, between Gibraltar and the French fleet. Then he returned to Gibraltar. The ruse had its effect. A Council of War assembled by Toulouse opted in majority for prudence, following the desire taken seriously of the Marquis d'O, whose main competence in naval matters was to be the dear friend of Madame de Maintenon. We see that if, in London, it was the greed of merchants that directed English politics; in France, at the same time, it was the courteous squabbling of alcoves.

Casualties & Losses ● The Anglo-Dutch had 3,025 killed[124] 6 while French losses amounted to 1,585 ruined. But with a much higher proportion of officers than on the Allied side. The French did not lose a single ship.

As a consequence of this English defeat, Te Deums were sung in all the churches of France. Because of the opposition of the Marquis d'O, a friend of Madame de Main-tenon, the Admiral de Toulouse did not chase the English-Dutch fleets to destroy them and retake Gibraltar from the English, which rendered the victory almost totally useless. Queen Anne of England *officially* ennobled her sailors who had so well protected her new acquisition, Gibraltar. But *unofficially*, Rooke suffered some disgrace.

Sources & Readings ●Reflections on the man-agement of Sir George Rooke [...] Vice-Admiral of Eng-land [...] in the late fight in the Mediteranean, Publication A. Baldwin, London, 1704. ●A Review of the late En-gagement at Sea, using a collection of private letters... containing the truest and most

[124] Two thousand three hundred and twenty-five Englishmen and 701 Dutchmen.

authentick accounts: with some remarks on the conduct of our admirals, particularly Sir G. R. [George Rooke.], by the admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel, London, 1704. ●Les Bourbon-Penthièvre (1678-1793) une nébuleuse aristocratique au XVIIIe siècle, Jean Duma, Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1995 [concernant l'amiral de France Louis Alexandre de Bourbon, comte de Toulouse]. ●A journal of the Proceedings of Her Majesty's Fleet under the command of Sir George Rooke from June the seventh to July the thirteenth, 1704, [...] in a letter to a friend, &c, Sir George Rooke, Publication J. Nutt, London, 1704.

Naval Raid of Brighthelmstone.

Date of action: May 1st, 1707.

Location: Southern England in the Channel or Manche or Mer d'Iroise. The battle zone is located about thirty kilometers South of Brighton. Geographic coordinates: latitude 50° 36' 23"North and longitude 00° 10' 46" East.

Conflict: War of the Spanish Succession [1701–1714].

Context: In the spring of 1707, the Chevalier de Forbin left Dunkirk and cruised in the North Sea and Iroise Sea in search for British warships or merchantmen. With 8 warships of 40 to 60 guns. He came across an English convoy of 56 transports escorted by 3 large warships of 70 to 76 guns and a frigate of 40.

Military Leaders in command ●*Marine Royale*: Le Chevalier de Forbin, Chef d'Escadre[125]. ●*Royal Navy*: Captain Baron Wyld commander of The ROYAL-OAK.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: Le BLACKWELL Forbin's flagship, [English capture of war of 54 guns], captain Tourouvre; Le MARS (54), Le SALISBURY (52, English capture, Cptn de Vézins), Le PROTÉE (48), Le JERSEY (46, capture), Le GRIFFON (44, Cptn Nangis), Le DAUPHINE (56, Cptn Roquefeuille); Le FIDÈLE (44), and another man-of-war; besides 4 corvettes or *"barques longues"* and *several small privateers*. ●*Royal Navy*: approximately 56 armed transports escorted by 4 warships, including The HAMPTON-COURT (70

[125] ●Amiral-Chevalier Claude de Forbin [1656-1733]. After a period in the Army in Flanders (1 676-1 677), he began a naval career as an ensign and then lieutenant in 1685. Following campaigns in the Far East, he returned to the English Channel where he was taken prisoner with Jean Bart [1689] but managed to escape from his English jailers. Promoted captain in 1702 and admiral in 1707, he achieved considerable success; at Cape Lizard [1708], he defeated a large English convoy in conjunction with Admiral Duguay-Trouin.

guns, Cptn George Clements), The GRAFTON (70, Edward Acton); The ROYAL-OAK (76 Baron Wyld).

Strategy or tactics: Roaming at sea in order to find and attack English convoys, escorted or not, in the manner of privateers. Attacks by cannonade and boarding, with no idea of overall maneuvers.

Background: The British squadron left *The Downs* with a convoy of about 55 merchantmen[126] bound to the westward. The French (presumably informed by their spies), had doubtless had their eyes for some time upon the convoy, came up with and attacked it.

Summary of the action: As soon as the French sighted the English, The GRAFTON was boarded by three men-of-war of 56 guns, who carried her after a warm dispute of half an hour. Among the three assailants, The MARS [54] approached the man-of-war GRAFTON [70]. The French sailors rushed to board. About twenty had reached the English ship when a ball broke the chain of his grappling hook. So, Le GRIFFON [44 guns], Le DAUPHINE [56] and Le BLACKWELL [54] threw themselves into boarding on the English HAMPTON-COURT. The fight was most savage and lasted an extremely long time. The Englishman eventually succumbed to the assault of the three ships. The commander was killed and his crew, who fought bravely, almost exterminated. The MARS drifted and the twenty French sailors fought desperately, but were killed one after the other, not without inflicting heavy losses on the attackers. The HAMPTON-COURT was attacked by one of the men-of-war, and afterword boarded by two others; from which, with great difficulty, she disengaged herself; but, as she was bearing away, fell in with two fresh ships which shot away her main-mast and foretop-mast.

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[126] The lowest estimate (of Clowes) is 40 merchantmen. Many English historians confess there were 55 merchantmen, and Forbin prides himself on 80 merchantmen captured. But since there were 55 merchantmen in the convoy, Forbin could hardly capture 80 unless he took some elsewhere on his way.

The last survivor, the lieutenant d'Olonne, wounded, was about to suffer the same fate when Le FIDÈLE and Le BLACKWELL rushed on The GRAFTON, took him in pincers and gunned him mercilessly. After a bloody fight, The GRAFTON lowered his flag to signify that he was surrendering. Only The ROYAL OAK managed to flee after suffering severe damage. It had to run aground under. The ROYAL-OAK, Captain Baron Wyld, commander, came up to her assistance, but, finding her ensign struck, made the best of her way to save herself, having eleven feet water in her hold, and being very much shattered. In the engagement he had received several shots under water from two French men-of-war, of 50 and 56 guns, that were boarding her for half of an hour; but he plied them so warmly that they were forced to sheer off, not without being much disabled[127]."

The ROYAL OAK made her way back as far as Dungeness, where she beached herself. She was ultimately saved; but both The HAMPTON COURT and The GRAFTON were carried by the French into Dunkerque. Captain Clements, mortally wounded by a shot in the belly, had continued to fight in his ship until he had fallen senseless on her deck, and until she had lost 200 of her people killed and wounded. Soon after, the vessel was taken possession of, a young midshipman "taking the opportunity of the confusion which prevailed at that time, and the greater attention of the enemy [the French] to the plunder than the care of their prisoners, caused his poor dying commander to be conveyed through a porthole into the longboat, which happened to be astern. He himself followed with seven others of the crew. They concealed themselves under the thwarts as well as they could, til The Hampton Court and the enemy' squadron had drifted so far with the flood as to render it safe for them to take to their oars. By a very happy but almost incredible exertion, they reached Rye on the 3rd of May[128]."

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[127] ●'Biog. Nav.' ii. p.115.
[128] ●Ibidem, p.66.

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: 220 killed or wounded. The French also captured 22 transport ships and 1,200 prisoners. ●*English*: 1,200 prisoners, several hundred killed, two new warships and 22 transport ships lost. Captain Clements, mortally wounded by a shot in the belly, had continued to fight in his ship until he had fallen senseless on her deck, and until she had lost 200 of her people killed and wounded. Soon after the vessel was taken possession. Captain Acton also perished.

Consequence of this English defeat: The insecurity of maritime trade increased economic disarray in England.

Sources & Readings: ●History of the French Navy, four electronic volumes, Eugène Sue, BNP, Paris, 1995. ●William Laird Clowes in *The Royal Navy*, Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1898. Vol.II, p.511. ●Histoire de la marine française, by Charles Bourel de La Ronciere and G. Clerc-Rampal, Paris, Librairie Larousse, 1934. ●Histoire de la Marine française, L. Le Saint, Limoges, Éditions E. Ardatit et C. Thibaut, Limoges, 1872. ●Histoire de la marine française sous le Consulat et l'E mpire, fait suite à l'Histoire de la Marine française sous la Première République, É. Chevalier, Paris, Librairie Hachette.

Battle of Lizard Point.

Other name: "*Disaster of the Portugal Convoy*".

Date of the action: October 21, 1707.

Location: 40 km from Lizard Point, southwest of England. Geographical coordinates: 49°26' North latitude and 05°13' West longitude.

Conflict: War of the Spanish Succession [1701-1714].

Context: the great European powers were clashing in order (officially) to impose their own candidate to the Spanish throne.

On October 9th, 1707 "a fleet of about 130 sails, bound for Lisbon with marchandises, warlike stores, and horses, sailed from Plymouth under convoy of The CUMBERLAND (80 guns, Commodore Richard Edwards), The DEVONSHIRE (80 guns, Captain John Watkins), The ROYAL OAKS (76, Captain Baron Wyld), The CHESTER (50, Captain John Balchen), and The RUBY (50, Captain Peregrine Bertie). By that time, the French Duguay-Trouin, who had been cruising against the Portuguese, had returned to Brest with his six ships. There, Forbin, returning from his northern (and Iroise Sea) expedition, had joined him; and the two commanders had received orders to put to sea together against the Portugal Convoy. Forbin's Division consisted of eight of the nine ships of the line:

The French had thus 14 men-of-war[129] to pit against the British five; and about 600 guns to pit against the British 336 (according to Clowes' account).

Military Leaders in command ●*French*: chevalier de Forbin and Duguay-Trouin. ●*English*: commodore Richard Edwards.

[129] ●Forbin says 14 but Du Guay Trouin's account says only 12.

Marine Royale

Forbin's Division

1-Le BLACKWELL[130] 54 Forbin flagship, capt. Tourouvre;
2-Le MARS 54,
3-Le SALISBURY 52, (prize), Capt. Vézins,
4-Le PROTÉE 48,
5-Le JERSEY 46, (Prize),
6-Le GRIFFON 44, Capt. Nangis,
7-Le DAUPHINE 56, Capt. Roquefeuille.
8-Le FIDÈLE 44,

Duguay-Trouin's Division

9-Le LYS 72 guns, Duguay-Trouin.
10-L'ACHILLE (64),
11-Le JASON (54),
12-Le MAURE (50),
Frigates : L'AMAZONE (40), La GLOIRE (38).

Royal Navy

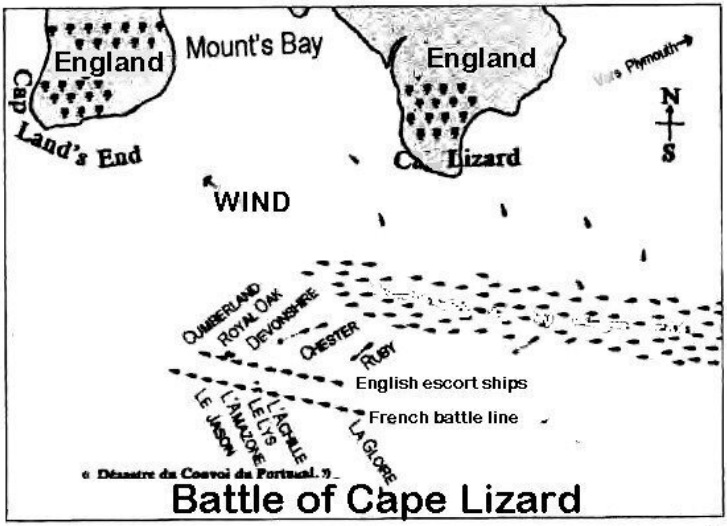
1-The CUMBERLAND (80 guns, Commodore Richard Edwards),
2-The DEVONSHIRE (80 guns, Captain John Watkins),
3-The ROYAL OAKS (76, Captain Baron Wyld),
4-The CHESTER (50, Captain John Balchen),
5-The RUBY (50, Captain Peregrine Bertie)
and 130 armed transports.

Military Forces involved ●French squadron: 12 ships, the most notable of which were Le LYS I Duguay-Trouin], Le GLOIRE [La Jaille], L'ACHILLE [chevalier de Beauharnais], Le JASON [chevalier de Coursérac], L'AMAZONE [Nesmond]. ●English squadron: The CUMBERLAND [80 guns], The DEVON-SHIRE [80 gunsl, The ROYAL OAK, The CHESTER, The RUBY [50 guns] and 130 armed transports.

Strategy or tactics: cannonade and musketry fire. ''There seems to have been lack of good feeling and loyal cooperation between Duguay-Trouin and Forbin, says Clowes[131]; and there is much reason to believe that, had they worked together better than they did, not a single ship, either of the escort or of the convoy, would have escaped them."

[130] ●Prize.
[131] ●Clowes, Vol. II, pp.513ff.

Summary of the action: The Chevalier de Forbin and Duguay-Trouin left Brest on October 19th with 6 ships each. On the 21st, while cruising 40 km from Lizard Point, Forbin saw a large convoy of 130 transports taking reinforcements to Lisbon under the escort of Commodore Richard Edwards: The CUMBERLAND [80 guns], The DEVONSHIRE [80 guns], The ROYAL OAK,



The CHESTER and The RUBY [50]. The big CUMBERLAND was immediately shelled by the artillery of the LYS, and assaulted for a long time by The GLORY. With 200 men out of action, The CUMBERLAND lost its flag and surrendered. The DEVONSHIRE [80] fought hard, but a fire broke out on board and she soon exploded. The ROYAL OAK escaped[132] , on 13 May 1711, pursued by a French ship [L'ACHILLE], but an accidental gargoyle[133] explosion; damaged L'ACHILLE, put 120 men out of action and allowed The ROYAL OAK to flee and dispatch once more. The CHESTER and The RUBY fought

[132] ●As during the naval battle of Beachy Head.
[133] ●Powder charge in a bag that was inserted into the gun to limit dangerous manipulations and to standardize the power of the charges.

valiantly against, respectively, Lee JASON and L'AMAZONE. At the end of this furious fight, they surrendered to the French.

Casualties & Losses ●The French seized 15 troop transports in addition to these warships, and 60 merchantmen.

Consequence of this English defeat: The English Expeditionary Force in Portugal received no reinforcements and had to remain on the defensive in Spain.

"The two convoys above-mentioned were not, unfortunately [says Clowes in Vol. II, pp.514 ff.] the only ones which, with more or less success, were attacked by the French during the year 1707. In February, 14 merchantmen bound for Lisbon in charge of The SWIFTSURE (70 guns, Captain Richard Griffith), and The WARSPITE (70, Captain Thomas Butler), were attacked by a squadron of French cruisers on the way from Brest to the West Indies, and several of them were taken. And on August 25th, The NIGHTINGALE (24, Captain Seth Jermy), being with a convoy *off Harwich*, was fallen in with by 6 French galleys. Jermy made one of the most spirited and protracted defences on record, and afforded time for his charges to escape, but was himself taken. The NIGHTINGALE was carried into Dunkerque... In May, The BRIDGEWATER (32, Captain Thomas Lawrence), cruising in Irish waters and learning of the presence of some French privateers off the coast, put to seafrom Kingdale in search of them; and at about midnight on the 16th fell in with 3 vessels, which proved to be L'AFFAIRE (24, frigate), La COCARDE (12 corvette), and their prize. The BRIDGEWATER engaged the two privateers for two hours and a half, at the expiration of which they crowded all sail and made off, leaving their prize to be taken possession of[134]."

"Captain Edwards, after his release from captivity in France, was brought before a court-martial, which honourably acquitted him; Captain Watkins perished with nearly 900 of his men; Captain Wyld, who was deemed to have misbehaved

[134] ●Clowes, Vol. II, pp.513ff.

himself, especially in breaking the line, was sentenced to dismissal from the service; but was subsequently, and perhaps deservedly, restored to it. CaptainBalchen returned to England, and was absolved by a court martial[135] from all blame for the loss of his ship. Captain Bertie did not live to return, but died while still a prisoner in France[136],'' probably out of desperation.

Sources & Readings ●The Royal Navy, A History From the Earliest Times to the Present, by William Laird Clowes, 7 Vol. Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1899. 7 Vol. ● Histoire de Daguay-Trouin, Bescherelle aîné, E. Ardant, Limoges, 1886. ●Vie de Mon-sieur Du Gay-Trouin, written by his hand. Nouvelle édition con-tenant les passages inédits des manuscrits de la bibliotheque et des archives communales de Saint-Malo, et colligée sur le teste du manuscrit de la bibliothèque de Chaumont, avec une introduction et des notes par Henri Malo, co-publication of E Pail-lart, Abbeville and éditions Bossard, Paris, 1922. ●Duguay-Trouin, Frédéric Koenig, Marne et Fils, Tours, 1880. ●Vie du Comte de Forbin, chef d'escadre des armées navales de France, M. Richer, Éditions J.-A. Joly, Avignon, 1811.

[135] ●Court Martial, October 27th, 1708.
[136] ●Clowes, Vol. II, pp.513ff.

Naval battle of Toulon.

Date: 11th February 1744

Location: French Mediterranean coast, approximate geographical coordinates: 43° 07' N, 05° 56' E.

Conflict: War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748. The extension of this war to America was called King George's named after George Ist, Elector of Hanover, who had succeeded Queen Anne on the English throne in 1714. The English also called this war 'Jenkins' Ear War', because an English officer named Jenkins had had his ear cut off by a Spaniard in the Caribbean. The Marchand Lobbies of London, and thus the English Parliament used this futile pretext to declare war on Spain.

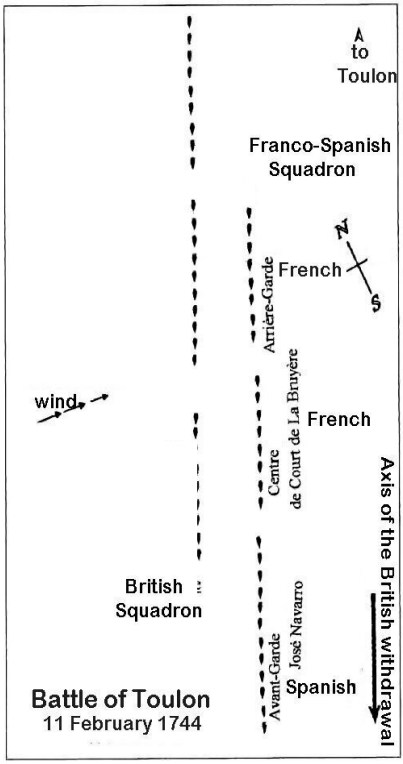
Background: When Emperor Charles VI, Sovereign of the Holy Roman Empire and head of the House of Habsburg, died on 20 October 1740, his daughter Maria Theresa of Austria succeeded him in the Austrian hereditary states by virtue of the Pragmatic Sanction. But the new King of Prussia, Frederick II the Great, immediately claimed the province of Silesia and had it invaded by his troops. In 1741, a coalition was formed to dismember Austria and, above all, to support the candidacy of Charles Albert, Elector of Bavaria and Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, candidate to the imperial crown of the Holy Roman Empire: France[137], the King of Prussia, the Electors[138] of Saxony and Bavaria [15,000 soldiers], the King of Spain[139] and the King of

[137] ●Hundred and thirty thousand soldiers.

[138] ●The "Electors" of the Holy Roman Empire were secular princes [four in number] or archbishops [three in number] who had the privilege of electing the German Emperor. Periodically, the Emperor summoned these seven electors, who joined with other princes, prelates, and city magistrates to form a Diet [from the Latin dieta: sitting days; deliberative assembly in some countries such as Poland, Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland...]. The Germanic Diet was the most important. It took decisions called the *recez* of the Empire. It disappeared at the beginning of the 19th century along with the Holy Roman Empire when Napoléon reorganised the German states.

[139] ●Sixty thousand soldiers.

Sardinia. So 205,000 soldiers, not counting Prussia itself. Prussia, Sardinia and Bavaria subsequently abandoned the coalition.



In 1743, England, which feared that France's hegemony in Europe was threatening its trade and colonial holdings, saw in this war an opportunity to weaken its hereditary enemy. The English king therefore openly sided with Austria and assembled a coalition which, together with his own army of 64,000 [including the Hanoverians], would counterbalance the power of France: Holland [30,000], Russia[140]. Thus, an immediate total of 216,000 soldiers, not including Austria.

Military leaders in command ●*French* Admiral de Court de La Bruyère; Squadron Leader Gabaret; Spanish Rear Admiral Don José Navarro. ●*English* admiral Rowley; Matthews; admiral Lestock.

Military Forces involved ● The French vanguard was led by Gabaret, squadron leader. The centre, by De Court de La Bruyère [Le TERRIBLE, 74 guns]; the rearguard, by Spanish

[140] ●Ninety-two thousand soldiers. 30,000 militiamen and limitless possibilities.

Battle of Toulon	
Marine Royale	**Royal Navy**
VAN 1-Le BORÉE 64, Capt Marqueu 2-Le TOULOUSE 60, Capt Darton 3-Le TIGRE 50, Capt Saurin 4-L'ÉOLE 64, Capt d'Alver 5-L'ALCYON 56, Capt Lancel 6-Le DUC D'ORLEANS 68, C. Dornes 7-L'ESPOIR 74, Capt d'Héricourt **CENTRE** 8-Le TRIDENT 64, Caylus 9-L'HEUREUX 60, Capt Gramier 10-L'ACHILÉON 60, Capt Vaudeville 11-Le SOLIDE 64, Capt Châteauneuf 12-Le DIAMANT 50, Capt Manak 13-Le FERME 70, Capt Gorgues 14-Le TERRIBLE 74, v/adm **De Court** 15-Le SANCTI ESPIRITU 68, Poison 16-Le SÉRIEUX 64, Capt Cahyla **REAR** 17-L'ORIENTE 60, Villena 18-L'AMERICA 60, Capt Petrucci 19-Le NEPTUNO 60, Capt Olivares 20-Le PODER 60, Capt De Urrutia 21-Le CONSTANTE 70, Capt Iturriaga 22-REAL FELIPE 110, adm **Navarro** 23-Le HERCULES 64, Capt Alvarez 24-Le BRILLANTE 60, Capt don Blas 25-L'ALCÓN 60, Capt Rentaria 26-SAN FERNANDO 64, Vegaflorida 27-SOBERBIO 50, Capt Valdes 28-SANTA ISABEL 80, Dauteville	**VAN** 1-CHATHAM, 50, Hughes 2-NASSAU 70, James Lloyd 3-CHICHESTER 80, Dilkes 4-BOYNE 80, Frogmore 5-BARFLEUR 90, r/adm Rowley 6-RANELAGH 80, Osborn 7-BERWICK 70, Hawke 8-STIRLING CASTLE 70, Cooper 9-BEDFORD 70, Townshend 10-FEVERSHAM 40, Watkins 11-WINCHELSEA 20, Marsh **CENTRE** 12-DRAGON 60, Watson 13-ROYAL OAK 70, Williams 14-PRINCESS 70, Robert Pett 15-SOMERSET 80, Slater 16-NORFOLK 80, Forbes 17-MARLBOROUGH 90, Cornewall 18-DORSERSHIRE 80, Burrish 19-ESSEX 70, Richard Norris 20-RUPERT 60, John Ambrose 21-NAMUR 90, adm **Mathews** 22-Galley DURSLEY 20, Vanbrugh 23-Galley ANNE 8, (fire) CapMackie 24-SUTHERLAND 18, hospital **REAR** 25-SALISBURY 50, Osborne 26-ROMNEY 50, Godsalve 27-DUNKIRK 60, Purvis 28-SWIFTSURE 70, Berkeley 29-CAMBRIDGE 80, Drummond 30-NEPTUNE 90, v/adm **Lestpck** 31-TORBAY 80, Gascoigne 32-RUSSELL 80, Long 33-BUCKINGHAM 70, Towry 34-ELIZABETH 70, Lingen 35-KINGSTON 60, John Lovatt 36-OXFORD 50, Harry Powlett 37-WARWICK 60, Temple West 38-MERCURY 8, fireship, Capt Peadle
4 frigates, 4 fireships	

Rear Admiral Don Navarro[141]. In total, the Franco -Spaniards had 28 vessels with 1832 guns and 17430 men. ● The *English* advance guard was commanded by Admiral Rowley, in The BARFLEUR of 90 guns; Matthews led the center [The NAMUR, 90 guns]; Admiral Lestock was at the head of the rear-guard with The NEPTUNE of 90 guns; The MARLBOROUGH, 90 guns; The NORFOLK, 80; The PRINCESS CAROLINE, 80 guns, Captain Osborne; The BERWICK, 70 guns; The RUSSELL, 80 guns... In total 54 ships, 2680 guns and 18 805 men; 26 ships and 848 guns more than the Franco-Spaniards.

Strategy or tactics: Tactically, two staggered parallel lines; cannonade only. Strategically speaking, this battle unlocked the port of Toulon. The theoretician Raoul Castex, in his "*Théories stratégiques*", commented on this period as follows: "This offensive attitude on our part... as well as the squadron warfare carried out in the Mediterranean at the same time (Battle of Toulon) had the result of fixing the English to such an extent that they did not undertake anything against our coasts during the whole of this period. It was not until the pre-tender [Charles Edward] had been rejected in Scotland and was finally defeated [at Culloden] that the English squadrons could cease their fortress interception cruises and think of other ventures[142]."

Summary of the action: On 11 February 1744, 12 Spanish warships [commanded by Don José Navarro] attempted to force the English blockade of Toulon [of Admiral Matthews] which had been in place for weeks. The old French lieutenant-general, almost eighty years old, De Court de La Bruyère, commander of the Mediterranean squadron, wanted to assist the Spaniards. The Franco-Spaniards lined up 28 ships of the line, the English,

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[141] ●The REAL FELIPE or ROYAL PHILIPPE, 114 guns, whose captain was Geraldine.

[142] ●«*Théories stratégiques*», admiral Raoul Castex, Société d'édition géographique, maritime et coloniale, Paris, 1929, chap. II, p. 159-160.

who were waiting for them, 54 of all sizes, some very large. The latter also had the advantage of the wind.

The two parallel lines of ships met off the coast of the war port. It started badly for the English, as Mat-thews missed the vanguard [the Spanish]. In fact, the English vanguard found itself at the level of the French centre and the English centre was engaged by the French rearguard. The English rearguard, under Admiral Lestock, remained perfectly in line with Admiral Mathews' original orders and, as he did not think to give them any orders to the contrary, did not participate in the battle at all.

The root cause was apparently a violent personality clash between the two British admirals.

The gun battle raged, with 800 killed and wounded in each squadron. Navarro's huge flagship La REALE [Le REAL FELIPE] [110 guns] repelled a fire ship. But the Spanish lost the dismasted PODER, which was captured by the English, but De Court de La Bruyère recaptured it before the battle was over.

Finally, the English broke off the fight and abandoned the battlefield to the French. They headed for the Balearics [Port-Mahon] and Gibraltar to repair their damage.

Casualties & Losses ●English: 800 killed and wounded, The MARLBOROUGH and The NAMUR were seriously damaged. ●French-Spanish: 800 killed and wounded.

As a consequence of this English defeat: the blockade of Toulon was lifted and the Spanish squadron was able to leave France. Admiral Matthews was court-martialed in England and was sentenced to retirement with some of his officers (Capt Dilkes, Frogmore, Williams, Burrish, Norris, Ambrose...). Admiral Lestock, who could hide behind obedience to his superior's orders was acquitted[143]. This verdict irritated English opinion, [i.e. the London Marchand Lobbies] who would have liked more sanctions against the military.

[143] The latter had not ordered him to come and help her.

Sources & Readings ●A Just, Genuine, and Impartial History of the Mémorable Sea-fight, Sea-fight, in the Mediterranean, betveen tbe combined fleets of France and Spain, and the Royal Fleet of England, under the command of the two admirals Mathews and Lestock... By an impartial hand, R. Walker, London, 1745. ●An Account of what pass'd in the Engagement near Toulon, between His Majesty's Squadron under the command of Admiral Matthews, and the Combin'd Fleets of France and Spahi, &c. Published by authority, Edward Owen, London, 1744. ●Captain G's [John Gascoigne], answer to a pamphlet entitled, Admiral Matthews' Remarks on the evidence given and the Proceedings had on his Trial, as far as it relates to his testimony therein mentioned. In a letter [...] to the president of the late court- martial, etc., Publication in London, 1746. ●A political conference betwixt Cardinal Tencin and the Devil, held the night before the late engagement between Admiral Matthews, and the combin'd squadrons of France and Spain off Toulon, Pierre Guérin de Tencin, cardinal, Publication in London, 1744. ●The history of the Mediterranean fleet fronm 1741 to 1744, with the original letters, etc., that passed between the Admirals Matthews and Lestock. Also all the other tracts on that important affair, admiral Richard Admiral Lestock, London, J. Millan, 1745. ●Vice-Admiral L-st-k [i.e. Vice-Admiral R. Lestock] 's account of the late Engagement near Toulon between His Majesty's fleet and the fleets of France and Spain [...] Also, letters to and from Adm-l L-st-k [Lestock], relating thereto since his arrival in England, in The History of the Mediterranean fleet from 1741 to 1744 etc. London, 1745.

Naval battle of Negapatam.

Date of action: 6-7 July 1746.

Location: East coast of Ceylon or Sri Lanka. The battlefield was directly off the port of Negapatam, now Nagappattinam. Geographical coordinates: Latitude 10°46' North, Longitude 79°50' East.

Conflict: War of the Austrian Succession [1740-1748].

Context: Since the death of Aureng-Zeb in 1707, the Mongol Empire was in full decay. As in France, at the end of Charlemagne's empire, all the former officials at the head of the provinces of India had been transformed, little by little, into independent and hereditary princes[144]. Then, through ambition and hoarding, Subabs and Nababs had come into conflict with each other.

To hasten the fall of the Mongol power, Nadir-Chah, a former camel driver who had seized the Persian throne in 1732, had invaded the empire and delivered Delhi to the pillaging[145]. The Mahrattes, for their part, were becoming increasingly formidable in the south of the peninsula.

In 1732, Dost-Ali-Khan had just succeeded his uncle Sadat-Oulla as ruler of Carnate. This Muslim principality, located on the coast of Coromandel, was part of the Decan [Dekkan] Subabia and had Arcate as its capital. Prince Dost-Ali-Khan took the French in sympathy and established assiduous relations with Dumas, governor of Pondicherry, the latter's administration, which Dupleix's was to eclipse in history, supremely prepared the way for his successor. By the intercession of his

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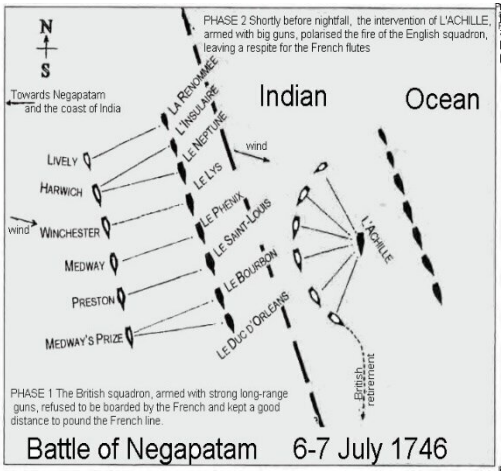
[144] ●And so they had formed a social class [the nobility] which they said was "of divine right" in order to better manipulate the uneducated people; while its power and privileges had been illegitimately usurped. Like the old European no-nobility, which had emerged from the imperial civil service of Charlemagne.

[145] ●In March 1739.

faithful friend Dost-Ali-Khan, the Great Mongol [or Mogol] gave the French, in 1736, the right to mint gold and silver rupees with the effigy of[146] 3 the Mogul of Arcate. This gave the trade of Pondichery a prodigious rise, and the French currencies acquired so much credit in India that the inhabitants preferred them, in their exchanges, to their national currency. Seeing himself well supported by the French, Dost-Ali-Khan seized the kingdom of Trichinopoly and then wanted to seize Tanjore [1739]. The king of Tanjore and the other Brahmin princes became frightened of the progress of the Mongols [Muslims] and turned to the Mahrattes [Brahmins like themselves]. Ragogi-Bonsoula, son of the Mahratte king with a strong warrior spirit, assembled a formidable army of 150,000 foot-soldiers and 60,000 horsemen and entered the field. Dost-Ali-Kahn was defeated on 20 May 1740 in a fierce battle, in the rain and in thick mud where even his elephants got stuck. Dost- Ali-Kahn and his son were trampled by their own pachyderms. Five days later, a convoy[147] was signed at the gates of Pondicherry. Dost's widow and daughters had come to claim the protection of their French friends, putting the latter in a very delicate situation, as the fortifications of the French city had not yet been completed.



[146] ●Coins were struck with a metal wedge called *coin* (wedge in French), which gave rise to the English word coin

[147] ●Twenty palanquins accompanied by 1,500 horsemen, 80 elephants, 300 camels, more than 200 ox-drawn carriages in which their servants travelled and more than 2,000 beasts of burden [Archives des Co-lonies. Correspondance générale C2 80].

However, in order not to show ingratitude towards the widow of a friend of France, the City Council decided to let the fugitives enter. The queen was greeted with an artillery salvo. The small garrison was put under arms, the stocks of ammunition and war ammunition were replenished, Dumas formed a corps of 4,500 Muslims[148].

OPPOSING FORCES at NEGAPATAM	
ROYAL NAVY	**MARINE ROYALE**
1● The MEDWAY 60 commod. Peyton 2●The PRESTON 50, Capt. Northesk 3●The HARWICH 50, Capt. Carteret 4●The WINCHESTER 50, Capt. Bertil 5●The MEDWAY'S PRIZE 40, Griffith 6●The LIVELY 20, Capt. Steven	1●L'ACHILLE 70, La Bourbonnais 2●Le BOURBON 34guns out of 42 port 3●Le PHÉNIX 38guns out of 44 ports 4●Le NEPTUNE 30 guns out of 36 5●Le SAINT-LOUIS 26 guns out of 36 6●LE LYS 24 guns out of 36 ports 7●Le DUC D'ORLÉANS 24/36 8●LA RENOMMÉE 24/28 9●L'INSULAIRE 20 guns/30 ports
TOTAL 270 guns + 1660 men	The French had 32 more guns on their 'flutes' but the English guns, bigger, could fire from further away without being reached and hit by the French.

On 20 January 1741, Dumas received an insolent letter from Ragogi summoning him to hand over the wife and son of Chanda-Sahïb and to pay him a tribute of submission. Dumas refused. So, after a few unsuccessful attempts, the Mahrattas agreed to deal with the French.

But let's go back a bit. Louis XIV had founded in 1664 and then dissolved the *Compagnie des Indes orientales*; it was Law, under the Regency, who revived it, endowed with extraordinary privileges; it authorized, for example, the aristocrats to *trade without derogation*[149] in order to allow the sons of

[148] ●Who was at the origin of the French army's Cipayes Corps and, consequently, of the English cipayes who were trained on the French model.

[149] ●Derogation is the action by which one loses the rights and privileges attached to nobility. Nobles derogated when they traded or worked for a living [in the metropolis, not in the colonies].

penniless or ruined nobility to rebuild their fortunes, to restore their image and to regain their place in Parisian aristocratic circles[150]; [A totally unjust society that demanded to be reformed by the Revolution.] Thus, Charles de Bussy[151] , an orphan, was sent to the Indies by the comptroller-general Orry to make a fortune for himself "*that corresponded to his birth*". In 1721, the farmer-general Dupleix had sent his ‘‘good-for-nothing son Joseph-Francois to Pondicherry, with an appointment as Counselor to the Colonial Council of the Trading Post [152], obtained by right of passage from the East India Company. When Joseph Dupleix arrived, Jeanne Albert was 16 years old[153]. She was extremely beautiful, had been married at 13 to an old man of thirty and had had three children. Dupleix became inseparable from the Vincent household[154]. Then he was appointed -- again for protection -- governor of the French Establishments of the India Company in Bengal. He resided in Chandernagor. He then brought the Vincents to him and took the trouble to send the weak husband on distant missions in Arabia... where he contracted fevers and died at the age of 50. He was a meek man, unable to resist the authority of a powerful and determined man like Dupleix. Jeanne had had ten living children up to that point, from her husband and probably also from Dupleix. Eighteen months later, aged33, she remarried her lover in Chandernagor.

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[150] ●No wonder then that colonial rulers shamelessly enriched themselves at the expense of the local population and the military, whose pay often did not reach the pockets of the combatants; both on the French and the English side, whose leaders such as Clive, Lawrence and many others had to answer to the London justice system after their return to England, especially if they were not of aristocratic origin, like the two above-mentioned. In Canada, the last governor, the Marquis Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil de Cavagnal, was also involved in numerous misappropriations and was arrested on his return to France and tried in the famous Canada Affair. He managed to be exonerated of all blame.

[151] ●Charles-Joseph Pâtissier, Marquis de Bussy-Castelnau [1718-1785].

[152] ●He was also general Commissioner of the Troops.

[153] ●Jeanne, who became begum of Carnate when her husband Joseph François Dupleix obtained the title of nabob, was born in Pondicherry on 2 June 1706. She was the daughter of Jacques Albert, official surgeon of the French of Pondichery, and Étisabeth Rose de Castro. Her father was French and her mother Indo-Portuguese (she was a quarteronne) and, as a result, she had a dark complexion. She spoke Tamil with her household.

[154] ●Jeanne's husband was called Jacques Vincent.

The marquis de Dupleix had just been appointed Governor of Pondicherry and of all the French Oriental Indies for the *Compagnie des Indes orientales.*

Thanks to his wife, who had a very thorough knowledge of the customs of this country and a remarkable intelligence, Dupleix then metamorphosed into a great diplomat. Madame Dupleix thus became a marquise and then a begum when her husband received the distinction of nabob, i.e. a high official of the Great Mogul.

In the year 1746, which is the subject of this chapter, having learned that an English squadron was sailing to India in order to destroy Pondicherry, the capital of the French Indies, Joseph François Dupleix carefully studied the situation. The French squadron in the Indian Ocean had just been recalled to Europe. The city's fortifications were too weak to withstand the guns of the English squadron, and the garrison numbered only 400-450 European soldiers. Seeing this, Dupleix asked for the protection of Anwarudin, Mogul of Carnate. The Mogul also sent a message to Madras, the capital of English India, urging strict neutrality and peace between its provinces and asking for respect for each other.

When the English squadron arrived towards the end of 1745, it was therefore limited to operations on the high seas. La Bourdonnais, faced with the English threat, managed to collect and regroup a few motley ships in Mauritius and thus formed a small squadron which arrived in July 1746 on the coast of Ceylon.

Commodore Peyton, who commanded the English fleet in the Indies, received information that a French squadron was off Ceylon. Peyton positioned himself off Negapatam to intercept the French and prevent them from reaching Pondicherry. The English objective of the battle was to intercept French reinforcements destined for the French Indies.

Military Leaders in command ●*French*: La Bourdonnais. ●*English*: Commodore Peyton, Barnett's successor.

Military Forces involved ●English: the entire English squadron was composed of warships with a majority of large 24-pounder artillery pieces. Five ships of the line and one frigate. ●French: three ships of the line and six frigates, but only one ship, L'ACHILLE, was fully armed. The other eight were "armed in flutes"[155]. Moreover, the calibers of the French ships were mostly small: of only eight and twelve pounds.

Strategy or tactics: Given the weakness of the French in artillery, La Bourdonnais decided to attack by boarding. But the English commodore, who knew the weakness of the French in naval artillery, decided to avoid boarding and to use only artillery by keeping a good distance so that the majority of the French guns, of too weak calibre, were unusable.

Summary of the action: On 6 July at sea, the two officers saw each other and began to maneuver; the English to keep the windward advantage and the French to try to take it. Commodore Peyton, wishing to avoid a collision and fight an artillery battle, kept to windward and by 4:30 p.m. the English squadron was able to open fire on the French from a safe distance, that is, out of range of the French artillery. With their 24-pounder artillery[156], they could inflict serious damage on the French ships, which could not even return fire with their 8 to 12-pounder guns and their infante-rie muskets.

From the beginning of the faction, three French ships suffered heavy damage. One of them was completely dismasted. Thirty minutes before nightfall, La Bourdon-nais arrived as a reinforcement with L'ACHILLE, the only ship in the French squadron whose artillery could compete with that of the English. For half an hour, L'ACHILLE polarised the fire of the entire English squadron and thus saved the other French ships from destruction. At nightfall, the fight ceased without either

[155] ●That is, with the lower gun ports closed and the guns partially disembarked to allow for increased cargo and a higher waterline.
[156] ●So, sending cannonballs of this weight.

combatant having the advantage. Each of the two antagonists had suffered only 30 killed and 50 wounded.

All the French ships were damaged, sometimes severely, by the enemy artillery; only one English ship was heavily damaged[157].

At sunrise the next morning, the two squadrons, still in battle lines, had maintained the same position within their linear formation. The An-English still had the wind advantage, as on the previous day. Early in the morning Commodore Peyton called a Council of War. It was decided to retreat southwards, abandoning Madras which he had been charged with protecting and handing over control of the seas in the Indian Ocean to the French. The French first pursued the British framework, then realised that they had only two days' food and little ammunition left, and that they were in danger of falling into the lee of Pondicherry and thus not being able to return.

So they turned back to Pondicherry after taking The INSULAIRE in tow. They arrived in Pondichcry on the evening of the 8th. On 19th August, La Bourdonnais learned that the English squadron was sailing off Negapatam again. He immediately sailed towards this sector and hoisted the Dutch flag to attract the English, but the English squadron did not let itself be lured and took off. La Bourdonnais waited there for 48 hours and returned to Pondichéry where he arrived on the evening of the 25th.

Casualties & Losses ● About 30 killed and 50 wounded on both sides.

Consequence of this English failure: The French had a free hand to reinforce the ground troops, which enabled them to lay siege to Madras and capture the city. "With strange pusillanimity, the commo-dore Peyton sailed to Trinquemalé to repair the

[157] ●L'ACHILLE's guns.

paltry damage inflicted during the battle, leaving Pondicherry unscathed and Madras unprotected against French attacks.15 ."

Sources & Readings ●La Bourdonnais. A Lecture Delivered in the Dalhousie Institute, the 13th of November 1865, by George Bruce Malleson, published by The Military Orphan Press, Calcutta, 1865. ●Mahé de La Bourdonnais, Governor General of the Islands of France and Bourbon, 1699-1753, Pierre Crépin, Éditions Leroux, Paris, 1922, ●Mémoires historiques de Bertrand François Mahé de la Bourdonnais recueillis et publiés par son petit-fils, Louis Charles Mahé de la Bourdonnais, Paris, 1827. ●Letters from Mauritius in the Eighteenth Century [...] including an account of Labourdonnais' capture of Madras, Charles Grant, introduction by Sîr John Pope Hennessy, K CM G, published in Mauritius, 1886. ●Mahé de la Bourdonnais, Gouverneur des Mascareignes, Dureau Reydellet, Éditions CNH, Saint-Denis, La Réunion, 1993. ●Mauritius, Mahé de La Bourdonnais. Documents réunis par le Comité du bicentenaire de La Bourdonnais, 11 février 1899, avec des annotations par le Comité des souvenirs historiques, Éditions E. Pezzani, L. L'Homme, Port Louis, 1899.

Naval battle of Cape Finisterre

Date of the action: May 3, 1747.

Location: Cabo Finisterre, in the northwest of Spain, region of the province of Galicia. Geographical coordinates of the Spanish Cape: 42° 53' North & 09° 16' West.

Conflict: War of the Austrian Succession [1740-1748].

Context: According to the English Historian William Laird Clows, in 1747, "France fitted out two considerable squadrons; one under the Marquis de La Jonquière, intended for the recovery of Cape Breton, and the other under M. Grou de St.Georges, of the Compagnie Française des Indes Orientales, for the conquest of British territory on the coast of Coromandel... The project of the French were known in England; and a squadron, under Vice-Admiral George Anson and Rear-Admiral Peter Warren, was specially fitted out to checkmate them. "The forces which were ultimately opposed one to the other are set forth in the note. The French had with them a convoy of indiamen, which brought the total number of their sail up to 38. M. de St-Georges left Groix in March, but, after suffering some losses from British cruisers and from very bad weather, had to put into the road of Isle d'Aix. La Jonquière there joined him and the two finally sailed on April 29th. Anson and Warren had left England on April 9th and had proceeded off Cape Finisterre, where, on May 3rd, the Cape bearing SE, distant 96km, they sighted the French. La Jonquière thereupon caused 12 of his best ships to shorten sail and form a line of battle ahead, while the rest stretched to the westward and crowded every possible stich of canvas. Anson also made signal for a line of battle, believing apparently that he was in the presence of a more formidable

squadron than was really before him; but, at Warren instance, he substituted the signal for a general chase[158]."

In early May 1747, a Royal Navy squadron came upon a French convoy of troop transports, escorted by the Marine Royale.

Military Leaders involved ●*French*: Marquis de La Jonquière[159] and Monsieur de Saint-Georges. ●*English*: Admiral Anson and Sir Peter Warren.

MARINE ROYALE	ROYAL NAVY
1●L'INVINCIBLE 74 Capt St.Georges 2●Le SÉRIEUX 64 adm de La Jonquière 3● Le JASON 50 Capt. Beccart 4●Le GLOIRE 40 Capt.La Jonquière de Taffanel. Frigates-flutes-indiamen (navires de commerce de la Cie des Indes françaises), Le DIAMANT 30, frigate, Le RUBIS flûte, Le VIGILANT 20 (indiaman), Le CHIMÈNE 36 (indiaman), L'APOLLON 30 (Indiaman), Le THÉTIS 22 (indiaman), Le MODESTE, 18, (indiaman), L'ÉMERAUDE 40 (indiaman), Le DARMOUTH 18 (Engl. Prize corvette), Le PHILIBERT 30 (indiaman)[160].	1●PRINCE-GEORGE 90 V/Adm Anson 2●DEVONSHIRE 66 V/Admiral Warren 3●NAMUR 74 Capt Boscawen 4●MONMOUTH 64 Capt. Harrison 5●PRINCE-FREDERICK 64 Capt. Norris 6●YARMOUTH 64 Capt. Piercy Brett 7●PRINCESS-LOUISA 60 Capt. Watson 8●NOTTINGHAM 60 Capt Saumarez 9●DEFIANCE 60 Capt. Grenville 10●PEMBROKE 60 Capt. Fincher 11●WINDSOR 60 Capt. Hanway 12●CENTURION 50 Capt. Denis 13●FALKLAND 50 Capt Barradel 14●BRISTOL 50 Capt W.Montagu 15●AMBUSCADE 40 Capt John Montagu The FALCON 10 Commander Gwynn The VULCAN 8 fireship, Capt Pettigrew
Total: 5 warships including 4 ships-of-the-line + merchantmen of the Compagnie des Indes.	Total: 17 warships including 15 ships-of-the-line, 1 corvette and 1 fireship.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: 5 ships of the line [escort], 6 frigates and about twenty troop and logistic transports, including Le RUBIS [20 sur 50], L'INVINCIBLE [74

[158] ●Clowes, Vol.3, p124 ff.

[159] ●La Jonquière de Taffanel, age 75 (!) His war-hungry and glory-hungry nobility certainly did not aspire to retirement at 55 and a 35-hour work week. He fought in Canada where the town named after him is located in Sagueney-Lac-Saint-Jean.

[160] Indiamen from the *Compagnie des Indes* or French East-India Co.

guns] and Le GLOIRE [44 guns]. The entire French squadron totaled only 344 guns and 2819 sailors and soldiers of [the] Marine. One of the French flute, le flute RUBIS, was commanded by an Irishman named MacArthy.

●*Royal Navy*: the English squadron consisted of 17 warships (15 of the line and 2 smaller vessels.) In all, a little over 1000 guns and 8000 sailors and foot soldiers of [the] Navy. The PRINCE-GEORGE was the flagship. The Rear Admiral of the Blanche, Sir Peter Warren, had hoisted his mark on the 66-gun DEVONSHIRE. The English squadron also included large vessels such as The NAMUR, The YARMOUTH, The DEFIANCE, The PEMBROKE, The WINDSOR, The CENTURION and The BRISTOL.

Strategy or tactics; The 5 ships of the Marine Royale sustained a hard fight in parallel lines against the 17 warships of the Royal Navy. The French escort blocked the way to let the logistic convoy escape. The maneuver was successful. "The French had with them a [troop] convoy, which brought the total number of their sail up to thirty-eight. M. de St. Georges left Groix in March... La Jonquière there joined him and the two finally sailed on April 29th. Anson and Warren had left England on April 9th, and had proceeded off Cape Finisterre, where, on May 3rd, the Cape bearing S.E.. distant 24 leagues, they sighted the French. La Jonquière thereupon caused 12 of his best ships to shorten sail and form a line of battle ahead, while the rest stretched to the westward and crowded every possible stich of canvas. Anson also made signal for a line of battle... but. At Warren's insistence, he substituted the signal for a general chase. La Jonquière was but ill-supported. Several of the French East India ships, especially Le VIGILANT and Le MODESTE, and later Le THÉTIS and L'APOLLON, looked to nothing but the idea of saving themselves. It is useless to examine the tactical details of an action of this kind. Suffice to say, that, after a running fight lasting from 4 to 7 pm, in which several of the

French captains behaved with great courage, and others[161] just tried to save themselves, all the ships which had remained in the French line fought fiercely. At 7 pm, Anson brought to, and detached The MONMOUTH, YARMOUTH and NOTTINGHAM in pursuit of the convoy, which then bore W. by S.W., distant about five leagues, and which had been followed and onserved during the action by the FALCON. The ships captured Le VIGILANT, Le MODESTE and Le DARTMOUTH, one a British captured ship, together with six of the convoy. Night saved the rest[162]."

Summary of the action: On May 3, 1747, upon sighting the English squadron, the French escort placed itself in line of battle, lowered its sails and opened the gun ports, while the transports accompanied by the frigate and other smaller ships continued their course by increasing their sails. Guessing that the French ships of the line, too few in number, wished only to block the path of the English in order to allow the convoy to pass, Sir Peter Warren asked Admiral Anson to bring up the signals indicating the pitched battle and to hoist those indicating the *chase of the convoy*. Warren's suggestion was immediately followed. The English squadron abandoned the line of battle, parallel to that of the French, and stalled all sail, pursued in turn by the French ships of the escort.

Around 4:00 p.m., the English ships arrived within gun range of the French logistic convoy. Then, the French escort threw themselves on the English ships to force them to fight and the combat began, fierce and deadly. "The French fought with equal conduct and valour," wrote an English historian[163] . In fact, the battle did not cease until the French warships, which were fighting 4 to 17, were crushed under the number. Having lost a third of their numbers, as 700 men had been put out of

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[161] ●The commercial ships of the *Compagnie des Indes*.

[162] ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, A History from the Earliest Times to the Present, Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1897; in 5 Volumes, Vol. 3, pp.124 ff.

[163] ●Grant, see *in fine*

action, they were overwhelmed by the English on board. The latter, themselves, had suffered equally high losses[164].

The French escort being neutralized, the English admiral detached several fast ships in pursuit of the French transports which had, of course, taken to sea. The MONMOUTH [64 guns], the YARMOUTH [64] and the NOTTINGHAM [60]. But they only managed to capture a few ships that were too slow. All the others were able to escape.

Casualties & Losses ●Royal Navy: 700 killed, wounded and prisoners. ●Royal Navy: about 700 killed and wounded. According to Clowes [Vol. 3, p.126] "the battle, considering its nature, was a costly one. The French lost about 700 killed and wounded, and the British, 520."

Consequence of this battle: The French escort had sacrificed itself to save the convoy, its mission was accomplished. The French therefore consider this battle as a victory. The English, who, although much more numerous, had managed to subdue only the convoy's escort, claimed victory as well.

As he presented his sword to Admiral Anson, Monsieur de Saint-Georges, who did not seem too upset by the outcome of the battle, wanted to make a pun: "Monsieur," he said, "you have defeated The INVINCIBLE and GLORY follows you[165]! It is true that if in the Royal Navy a defeated admiral was systematically court-martialed at the risk of his life, in the Marine Royale, whose Captains were all aristocrats, the powerful families protected their offspring, even if they behaved badly.

For this great deed, Admiral Anson became a peer of Great-Britain, England having now become Great-Britain, after having indirectly annexed Scotland and Wales[166].

Sources & Readings ●The account of the action is based upon the British and French dispatches, and especially upon the

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[164] ●Although Smollet admitted only 500.
[165] ●Le GLOIRE had received a crew from the English prize.
[166] ●Wales had already been annexed by Henry VIII in 1536.

papers of La Jonquière in the *Archives de la Marine*, and upon the report of Moïse Antoine Louis Boisseau de La Galernerie. ●Le chef d'escadre Marquis de La Jonquière, gouverneur général de la Nouvelle-France et du Canada de 1749 à 1752, Camille de Taffanel marquis de La Jonquière, Garnier Frères, Paris, 1 896. ●Le marquis de La Jonquière. Gouverneur-Général du Canada, Louis Duval, Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne, E. Renaut-de-Broise, Alençon, 1862. ●The life of George Lord Anson, admiral of the fleet, vice-admiral of Great Britain and first Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty, previous to, and during, the Seven-Years War, Sir John Barrow, Editions J. Murray, London, 1839. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, A History from the Earliest Times to the Present, Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1897; in 5 Volumes, Vol. 3, pp.124 ff.

Naval battle of Cape Finisterre.

Date of the action: October 14, 1747-

Location: The battlefield was located off Cabo Finisterra, Spanish Galicia. Geographical coordinates: 42° 53' North latitude and 01° 02' West longitude. Cape Finisterra is located about 50 km West of Santiago de Compostela.

Conflict: War of the Austrian Succession [1740-1748].

Background: On August 9th, Admiral Sir Edward Hawke sailed off Cape Finisterre, northwest of Spain, with a squadron of 14 ships of the line and several frigates, totaling 900 guns and 7200 sailors and soldiers of the [navy]. The flagship was the 66-gun DEVONSHIRE. Its mission was to intercept at the mouth of the Charente a convoy of French merchant ships, coming from the island of Aix and bound for the West Indies, escorted by 8 warships under the command of Monsieur de L'Étanduère.

Military Leaders in command ●*French*: Monsieur de L'Étanduère. ●*English*: rear-admiral Sir Edward Hawke 1705-1781[167].

Military Forces involved ●*English*: 14 ships of the line and several frigates, the whole totaling 900 guns and 7,200 sailors and soldats. ●*French*: 8 warships with 500 cannons and 3,500 sailors and soldiers. There were no fewer than 252 merchantmen with the French Division.

Strategy or tactics: Le CASTOR (26) and Le CONTENT (64) were ordered to stay in protection of the huge convoy of 252 transports and merchantmen which tried to escape while the 8 ships of the French division turned around and attacked the English squadron to prevent it from catching up with the convoy, and they succeeded. The French escort interposed. In spite of the disproportion of forces, the gun battle and boarding were extremely sustained by the French, so much so that three of the

[167] ●Baron from 1776.

five French ships were not taken by the English until they were completely dismasted and the other two partially dismasted. The French, much less numerous, had to fight *on both sides*[168], because the English had enveloped them and taken them in battle.

source : Clowes, vol.3 p.127 **Battle of Cape Finisterre** 14 Oct. 1747	
BRITISH FORCES	**FRENCH FORCES**
1-DEVONSHIRE 66 r/adm Hawke **2**-KENT 74 Capt. Fox **3**-EDINBURGH 70 Capt. Thomas Coles 4-YARMOUTH 64 Charles **5**-MONMOUTH 64 Capt Henry Harrison **6**-RINCESS-LOUISA 60 Capt Ch. Watson **7**-WINDSOR 60 Capt Thomas Hanway **8**-The LION 60 Capt Arthur Scott **9**-TILBURY 60 Capt Arthur Scott **10**-NOTTINGHAM 60 Capt Philip Saumarez **11**-DEFIANCE 60 Capt John Bentley **12**-EAGLE 60 Philip Brydges Rodney **13**-GLOUCESTER 50 Capt Philip Durell **14**-PORTLAND 50 Capt Charles Stevens and some frigates.	**1**-Le TONNANT 89 comm. de L'Étanduère **2**-L'INTRÉPIDE 74 Capt. Vaudreuil **3**-Le TRIDENT 64 Capt d'Amblimont **4**-Le TERRIBLE 74 Capt. du Guay **5**-Le Monarque 74 Capt. La Bédoyère **6**-Le SÉVÈRE (ou SEVERN) 56 Capt. Rouret **7**-Le FOUGUEUX 64 Capt. de Dromentière Le CONTENT 64 was sent with the convoy Frigates etc... Le CASTOR 26 with convoy
14 warships and some frigates	7 man of war in line and 2 with the convoy

Commenting upon the two battles of 1747 Cape Finisterra, Captain Mahan, US military theorist, says about the two 1747 combats off Cape Finisterra [May 3rd and October 14th] : "Two encounters between English and French squadrons happened during the year 1747... In both cases the English were decidedly superior [at least numerically], and though there was given opportunity for some brilliant fighting by particular captains, and for the display of heroic endurance on the part of the French, greatly outnumbered, but resisting to the last, only one tactical lesson is afforded. This lesson is that, when the enemy, either as the result of battle, or from original inequality, is

[168] ●On both sides, as at Aboukir, at the end of the same century.

greatly inferior in force, obliged to fly without standing on the order of his flying, the regard otherwise due to order must be, in a measure at least, dismissed, and a general chase ordered... In both cases [on May 3rd and October 14th, 1747], the signal was made for a general chase, and the action which resulted was a *mêlée*. There was no opportunity for anything else; the one thing necessary was to overtake the running enemy, and that could only certainly be done by letting the fastest or best-situated ships get ahead, sure that the speed of the fastest pursuers is better than that of the slowest of the pursued and that, therefore, either the latter must be abandoned, or the whole force brought to bay[169]."

Summary of the action: On the morning of October 14, the two squadrons arrived in sight of each other. The English admiral raised the signal to "give chase" and then changed his mind when he saw the ships of the French escort heading straight for him. He then ordered: "Line up for battle". At first, L'Étanduère mistook the English squadron for part of his own huge convoy from which he had been separated during the night.

Then, when he recognized the English squadron, he ordered Le CONTENT and the frigates to continue their route with the merchant ships while he put himself in line of battle to delay the English. But this time, as in the battle of May 3rd at the same place, the English had to stop while the convoy ran away. It was 11:00 am. The naval battle began at about 11:30 a.m. as the two large British ships, The LION[170] and The PRINCESS-LOUISA[171], moved up the entire French line, firing a broadside at the first ships of the French escort, then receiving point-blank broadsides from the others as their own batteries were discharged. The rest of the English squadron came to their aid and the battle became general. The French, much less numerous, had to fight *on both sides*. By 4 p.m., the ships of both nations were badly damaged; the French (caught in a pincer

[169] Bring to bay : US idiom for caught, trapped or cornered
[170] ●66 guns, Captain Scott.
[171] ●66 guns, captain Watson.

movement) more than the others. But the logistical convoy was able to continue its way.

Some French ships had been crushed under the number; two others still fought until the last extremity, until 19h00 then were taken, after more than seven hours of hard fight. The last three French ships, the largest, which could fight more effectively against such overwhelming forces, tried to stall by hoisting all the sails they could; they were L'INTREPIDE[172], Le TONNANT [L'Étanduère's flagship] and another of 74 guns. But The NOTTINGHAM, The YARMOUTH and The EAGLE went after them. The three French ships had been badly damaged, while the three English[173] ones were still in a less desperate state. After an hour of pursuit, they managed to catch up with the French and the fight resumed, more furious than before.

But the growing darkness was now greatly hindering the fighters who had to take a guess to shoot at random. Captain Philippe Saumarez[174] of the NOTTINGHAM was killed by a French sniper. Soon, the night became totally dark and the fight ceased completely. Knowing that the other English ships would join the battlefield the next morning and that, in any case, the mission was accomplished, since the huge convoy of merchant ships had passed, the three French captains (of which Le TONNANT and L'INTRÉPIDE) decided to go repair their avaries to Brest (France).

Casualties & Losses ●The loss of life [killed and wounded] was almost equal on both sides. According to W.L. Clowes the

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[172] ●Comte de Vaudreuil, 80 canons.

[173] ●With the exception of the EAGI.E. whose crew repaired during the pursuit and threw its dead overboard.

[174] ●Captain Philippe Saumarez was a Norman from Sainr-Pierre-Port, in the Channel Island of Guernsey, which the accidents of history had made a personal possession of the King of England who is duke of this island. He was probably the grand-father of the future Admiral Jacques [James] Saumarez, 1st Baron de Saumarez [1757-1836] of the Royal Navy, who fought against the French during the wars of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Empire. He was knighted for services rendered in 1831, five years before his death, and became the 1st Baron de Saumarez.

French lost about 700 wounded and killed, and the British 520. Among the British, Captain Thomas Grenville (of the DEFIANCE) was killed, and Captain Boscawen (of the NAMUR) wounded. On the *French* side, La Jonquière and d'Aubigny, his flag captain, were wounded.

The English, because they had taken several ships of the escort which were integrated into the Royal Navy (Le SÉRIEUX, Le JASON, Le RUBIS, L'INVINCIBLE and merchantmen Le PHILIBERT, Le DIAMANT, Le VIGILANT, Le CHIMÈNE, L'APOLLON, Le THÉTIS, which participated in the defense), and the French because the escort had accomplished its mission: to protect the convoy that was to supply the Antilles (in soldiers). The name of Le SÉRIEUX was changed to The INTREPID, and that of Le DIAMANT to The ISIS.

Consequence of this battle: Both navies claimed victory: The English, because they had taken several ships of the escort. The French claimed victory against *since the very objective of the battle was achieved: to prevent the British from seizing the huge merchantmen, the supply and troop convoy of transports* (252 ships).

Sources & Reading ●A Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving to Almighty God, to be used at Morning and Evening Service, after the General Thanksgiving, throughout the Cities of London and Westminster [...] on Sunday the Ninth of December, 1759; and in all Churches and Chapels throughout England [...] on the Sunday after the Ministers thereof receive the same: For the Victory gained by His Majesty's Fleet under the Command of Sir Edward Hawke, on the 20th of November last, Thomas Bisket, London, 1759. ●The conduct of Admirals Hawke, Keppel, and Palliser, compared, J. Bew Editions, London, 1779. ●The Hawke Papers; a Selection, 1743-1771, by Ruddock F. Mackay, Aldershot [G.B.], Scolar Press [for the Navy records Society], 1990. ●Sailors in battle, Tome I, From the origins to the XVIII century, Paul Chack, Édition du Gerfaut, Paris, 2001.

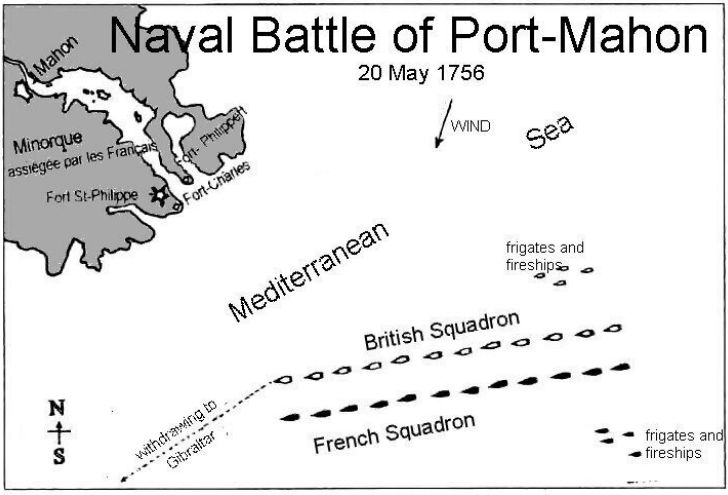
●Petite histoire des grands vaisseaux du XVIII siècle, Loïc Du Rostu, A.R.H.I.M.S., Saint-Gilles-Croix-de- Vie, 1984.

Naval Battle of Minorca.

Date of action: 20 May 1756.

Location: Off Port-Mahon, Minorca, Balearic Islands, Mediterranean Sea. Geographic coordinates: 39° 53' north latitude and 04° 15' east longitude.

Conflict: The Seven Years' War [1756-17631] had just broken out, on May 17, between France on the one hand, and Prussia and England on the other.



France had decided to attack Menorca, a British base in the central Mediterranean, to retaliate against English peacetime piracy of which Menorca served as a naval base. English warships constantly attacked French merchants and took refuge in Port-Mahon.

An English squadron[175] was then sent to the Mediterranean in April 1756, that is to say a few weeks before the official

[175] ●Commanded by Admiral John Byng.

declaration of war, to rescue Menorca where the French army of the Duke of Richelieu invested Fort Saint-Philippe[176]. Byng decided to fight a naval battle with the French squadron.

Naval Battle of Minorca May 20th, 1756.	
MARINE ROYALE	**ROYAL NAVY**
1-L'ORPHÉE 64, Raimondis d'Eoux 2-L'HIPPOPOTAME 50, Rochemore 3-Le RDOUTABLE 74, adm Glandevez 4-Le SAGE 64, Capt. Durevest 5-Le GUERRIER 74, Villars la Brosse 6-Le FIER 50, Capt. D'Herville 7-Le FOUDROYANT 84, Galissonière 8-Le TÉMÉRAIRE 74, Beaumont 9-Le CONTENT 64, Sabran-Grammont 10-Le LION 64, Saint-Aignant 11-La COURONNE 74, LaClue-Sabran 12-Le TRITON 64, Capt. Mercier	1-DEFIANCE 60, Capt. Th. Andrews 2-PORTLAND 50, Patrick Paird 3-LANCASTER 66, G. Edgecumbe 4-BUCKINGHAM 68, r/adm T. West 5-CAPTAIN 64, Capt. Charles Catford 6-INTREPID 64, Capt. James Young 7-REVENGE 64, Frederick Cornwall 8-PRINCESS LOUISA 60, Thom. Noel 9-TRIDENT 64, Capt. Philip Durell 10-RAMILLIES 90, v-adm John Byng 11-CULLODEN 74, Capt.Henry Ward 12-KINGSTON 60, Capt.William Parry 13-DEPTFORD 50, Capt.John Amherst
796 guns	**833 guns**
Frigates etc: NYMPHE 26, JUNON 46, ROSE 26, GRACIEUSE 26, TOPAZE 24.	**Frigates etc**: Chesterfield 40, PHŒNIX 20, FORTUNE 14, EXPERIMENT 20, DOLPHIN 20.

Military leaders in command ●Vice-Admiral John Byng, Viscount Torrington ●Le Duc de Richelieu.

Military Forces involved ●Thirten English ships-of-the-line and four frigates and one smaller warships converted into fire-ships. ●Twelve French ships-of-the-line and four small frigates.796 guns

Strategy or tactics: Linear training, parallel lines. Action reduced to cannonade, because the English having the wind, the French could not embark on the boarding. Among the ships of the English squadron were five ships of Commander Edgecombe, which had recently been at Port-Mahon at the time

[176] ●Fortress held by the English army which covered Port-Mahon.

of the French landings; they could have been neutralized if La Galissonnière had had enough presence of mind. Admiral Castex, in his Strategic Theories, gives this as an example of missed opportunities[177].

***Summary of action*:** On May 20, 1756, the two fleets[178] saw each other around 7:00. The alarm was given on both sides. At about 10:00, Admiral Byng ordered his fleet to manœuvre in order to take wind from the French and as soon as it was done, to attack in line of battle.

About 13 English ships[179] were in formation against the French [12 large ships and 4 small ones] who also went into linear battle formation.

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[177] •"History is replete with examples that show how wrong those who did not care about the value of organized force missed such opportunities, and how much they had to repent later. Ali Pasha... neglects, on his passage to Corfu, to crush Veniero very inferior in forces. He found him two months later on the battlefield of Lepanto, where the Turks were defeated. In 1740, we see d'Antin, arriving in the West Indies (with 14 ships, soon carried by reinforcements to the figure of 22), miss the opportunity to attack Vernon who had only 7, so that he gave time to the English admiral to be reinforced a month later by the 25 sails that Ogle brought him from England. In Menorca, *La Galissonnière did nothing to block Port-Mahon or to attack offshore the 5 ships of Rear-Admiral Edgecombe, which escaped to Gibraltar to join Byng and which will appear a word later at the battle of May 20, 1756 under Menorca*. On 25 and 26 January 1782, de Grasse did not dare to attack fully (with 26 vessels), Hood who was at anchor at Saint-Christophe with 22 vessels. There was only one insignificant cannonade. Hood was able to flee at night, on 15 February, unmolested. Grasse was to see him again two months later, at Les Saintes. Perhaps he regretted not having exonerated him when he could... [Grasse reoffended on 9 April in Dominica, where he neglected the opportunity to destroy Rodney's vanguard]. Guichen and Cordoba enjoyed superiority when, in 1781, during their cruise in the English Channel, they met Darby retired to the anchorage of Torbay. The position of Darby, who had only thirty ships and who was dealing with fifty Allied ships, was absolutely critical. Attacked, he was lost." Amiral Raoul Castex, *Théories stratégiques*, Société d'édition géographique, maritime er coloniale, Paris, 1929, p. 206.

[178] ●The author of this English text, Captain Augustus Hervey, later Third Earl of Bristol, participated in the battle. He defended Byng before a court martial. So, he seeks here to describe the faults of each in order to demonstrate that all have their share of responsibility in the defeat. The area of the battle was located southeast of the island of Menorca.

[179] ●Not to mention the ships transformed into fireworks, including that of Hervey which was quite old.

Finding that the English had succeeded in appropriating the wind, the French had to resolve to wait until they were willing to attack. The English fleet extended westward, the vanguard separated from the rearguard. The admiral gave the order to close ranks. This was done immediately[180]. The two battle lines were now 6^{km} apart.

Shortly after 14:00, Byng gave the signal for the attack. Each English ship had to let itself be carried on the French ship facing it. Rear-Admiral Temple West, second in command after Byng, and his second Edgecombe, who commanded The LANCASTER, engaged the cannonade with the French, but still remained too far away for it to be effective. Slowly, the English ships approached the French line, which was itself unable to move towards the English because of the headwind.

From the centre, Admiral Byng signaled DEPTFORD (50) to leave the line and move into tactical reserve. The KINGSTON [Captain William Parry, rear-admiral in 1762], instead of continuing to advance towards the French, stopped. The CULLODEN was too far from the admiral and The RAMILLIES too exposed to French fire when the battle began.

Shortly after the admiral had begun the battle, The INTREPIDE lost her foremast bfoken by French guns and, thus distraught, drifted towards the other ships aft. This accident forced The REVENGE and several others to maneuver to avoid a collision with The INTREPIDE, which split for a few minutes the division of the rear-admiral and that of the admiral. The ships that preceded the admiral all retreated, which forced the admiral to do the same for fear of being approached. The TRIDENT increased the bruise by not advancing with the admiral at first, in spite of the appeals addressed to him. Hervey considered this incident the cause of the defeat of the English.

The admiral made new signals to advance and, all sails out, ordered DEPTFORD to take the empty seat of The

[180] ●Except by The PORTLAND, in the lead, who could not maneuver.

INTREPIDE and CHESTERFIELD to close ranks on The INTREPIDE; but orders were not easily received. During all these events, of course, the cannonade raged between the two fleets. The two English lead ships, The PORTLAND and The LANCASTER were soon clearly separated from the rest of the English line. Already, the entire English vanguard, which was constantly firing on the French, had its mast damaged by the precise blows of the French artillery. Byng had the determination to continue the fight the next morning [according to Captain Hervey] at nightfall.

Night fell on this situation.

Dawn came, very foggy. The INTREPIDE and The CHESTERFIELD were not in sight. Th e DOLPHIN and The PHOENIX were sent on reconnaissance to search for these two units while the rest of the English ships repaired their damage. The French fleet, still unable to attack because of the headwind[181], kept a close eye so that no reinforcements were landed on the island of Minorca.

The next morning, on the 22nd, Major Hervey was appointed commander of DEFIANCE [60 guns] to replace an officer killed in action. In the afternoon, The INTREPIDE and The CHESTERFIELD were spotted again.

On the morning of the 23rd, the English fleet continued to wait. A *General War Council*[182] was convened for the 24th. Byng repeated his mission: to *rescue the island of Menorca, and, in case a French fleet passed the Strait of Gibraltar, to send an adequate number of ships to intercept them.* Some officers made negative comments about the absurdity of these Admiralty orders. The Council therefore decided that the fleet was to monitor Gibraltar, since many ships were in need of repair, and Port Mahon was already heavily invested by the French, so it would be best to retreat to Gibraltar, because in the event of a

[181] ●Let us recall that it was *downwind*, that is to say that the wind took it away from the English fleet.
[182] ●For officers of the Navy and the Army.

[British] defeat the French might also attack Gibraltar and jeopardize this strategic base. It was therefore decided to give up the fight.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown. Clowes writes: The losses in killed and wounded were nearly equal: English 42 killed and 165 wounded; French 26 killed and 136 wounded. La Galissonière puts the French loss at 38 killed, and 115 wounded.

As a result of this English defeat, Byng made a capital mistake that would cost him his life and honour. He should have landed his reinforcement for the besieged garrison of Port-Mahon before the battle in order to be sure of accomplishing his primary mission. Defeated, he decided to retreat to Gibraltar without trying to land [in one way or another] the military reinforcements or harass the French lines of communication between Toulon and the Balearic Islands. Faced with this defeat and its grave consequences[183], he was used as a scapegoat and was subsequently court-martialed and shot in 1757. It seems obvious that this error was rather attributable to the English government in Newcastle, which had yielded to the privileges of the London Merchant Lobby to keep too many forces in the Channel (and also the best vessels] to protect merchant shipping in this sector. Commanders H. Ward and F. Cornwall were called cowards during the same trial. Ward was placed on half pay in 1757 and Cornwall retired. Obviously, there was no question of condemning the *real culprits* for this defeat (the London Lobby) so the fighters had to be punished.

Sources & Readings ●*Concordia Discors; or, An argument to prove that the possession of Dunkirk, Port Mahon, Gibraltar, and other places by the English may be of worse consequence to these Nations than if they had still continued in the hands of the French and Spaniards, to which is added the history of standing armies*, London, 1712. ●*An Account of the facts which appeared on the late enquiry into the loss of Minorca*. From authentic papers, by the Monitor, Printed for J. Scott... London,

[183] ●The loss of the military base of Port-Mahon for the English.

1757. ●Port-Mahon. La France à Minorque sous Louis XV, 1756-1763, d'après les documents inédits des archives de France et des Baléares, Édouard Guillon, docteur-ès-lettres, Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires, T. 5, Paris, 1893. ●Les Amours Grenadiers, ou la Gageure Angloise, Petite Pièce en un acte par F A, Quétant sur la prise de Port Mahon... avec la Musique, Paris, Chez Duchesne, 1756. ●The Royal Navy, by WL Clowes, vol.3, p.149 ff.

The French Air Force's retaliatory strike on Gibraltar was largely symbolic, as Germany remained France's principal adversary in 1940. However, tensions flared after the British launched a surprise and controversial attack on several French naval vessels moored in the port of Mers el-Kébir—ships that were manned only by maintenance crews. This act, perceived in France as a profound betrayal, provoked a surge of public outrage. Some extremists even called for a declaration of war against Britain. Marshal Pétain, however, managed to defuse the crisis and prevent further escalation. Nevertheless, when the British attempted a follow-up assault on Dakar—aiming to capture the Banque de France's gold reserves and sway French West Africa to the Allied cause—the operation backfired. This time, the French Government Forces responded with full resistance, and the British offensive ended in failure.

Naval battle of Negapatam.

Date of action: 28 April 1758.

Location: South-east India, on the Coromandel coast and Sri Lanka, off Negapatam; now spelt Nagappattinam. Coordinates: 10°46' N latitude and 79°50' E longitude.

Conflict: Seven Years' War [1756-17631- India.

Background: A French squadron of eight troop transports belonging to the French East India Company arrived in Pondicherry with reinforcements of European soldiers. It came from France, via the Mascarene Islands which served as a forward base. Off Ceylon [Sri Lanka], an English squadron of the Royal Navy tried to intercept it.

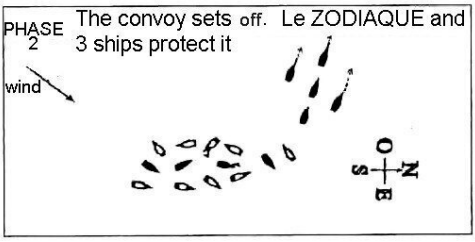
Antagonistic Forces	
MARINE ROYALE	***ROYAL NAVY***
1-Le ZODIAQUE 74, warship [1] 2-Le VENGEUR 54, indiaman 3-Le BIEN-AIMÉ 58, indiaman 4-Le CONDÉ 44, indiaman 5-Le St-LOUIS 50, indiaman 6-Le MORAS 44, indiaman 7-Le SYLPHIDE 36, indiaman 8-Le DUC-D'ORLÉANS 50, indiaman 9-Le DUC-DE-BOURGOGNE 60 m.s.	1-The YARMOUTH 64, Capt. Harrison 2-The ELIZABETH 64, Cap. Kempefelt 3-The CUMBERLAND 66, Brereton 4-The WEYMOUTH 60, Vincent 5-The TIGER 60, Capt. Latham 6-The NEWCASTLE 50, Capt. Legge 7-The SALISBURY 50, Capt Somerset +Several smaller ships
TOTAL **1 warship + 7 merchants**	TOTAL **7 large warships-of-line**

Military leaders in command ●*French*: Comte d'Aché. ●*English*: Admiral Sir George Pocock [1706-1792]. This admiral was the son of Thomas Pocock, an Anglican chaplain in the Royal Navy. George entered the Royal Navy through the protection of his maternal uncle, Captain Streynsham Master. He started on

[1] ●Flagship and only French warship.

The SUPERB in 1718, was promoted to Lieutenant in April 1725, Commander in 1733 and Post-Captain in 1738.

Military Forces involved ●*French*: one warship and eight armed merchantmen of the French East India Company, crowded with land troops.



Strategy or tactics: English attempt to intercept a French merchant convoy. Bombardment only. No boarding. Gradual disengagement of d'Aché's cadre to save his convoy.

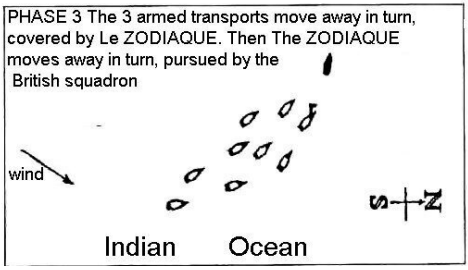
Summary of the action: The two squadrons met at noon on 28th April off Negapatam. At that time, seven French ships were in line and two were cruising offshore. The French and English formed two parallel lines and between 3:00 and 4:00 pm, the whole of the English line threw itself on Le ZODIAQUE[2]. When the two squadrons were within musket range, Pocock gave the signal to return fire, the French having already opened fire. The French merchant ships fired on the English warships, which disregarded them and concentrated on Le ZODIAQUE, the only French warship. At about 4:00 p.m., the battle became general.

The two admirals were strafing each other in a deadly struggle. The English warships clustered around Le ZODIAQUE.

The French decks were being swept by cannonballs, and were cluttered with land troops[3]. This congestion was a great hindrance to the French gunners. The French fire, on the other hand, was directed at the English masts, which were falling one after the other. After a moment of combat, the Comte d'Aché

[2] ●Le ZODIAQUE was the only warship of the French squadron.
[3] ●While the English ships were not, which gave them a considerable advantage.

ordered his transports to continue towards Pondicherry, while he and three other transports blocked the way of the English squadron. Some time later, seeing that the convoy of transports was out of reach, Le ZODIAQUE unhooked her three helpers, after which she stalled in turn, pursued by the pack of English ships. It was then that a French warship [Le COMTE-DE-PROVENCE, 74 guns] and a frigate, La DILIGENTE [24 guns], which were in Pondicherry, started the cannonade and went to the aid of Le ZODIAQUE, which, seeing itself strong enough, stopped to face the English squadron and renew the battle. But the English admiral decided to turn back and retreat to Madras, as several of his warships had been too badly damaged by French fire. He stalled and retreated to Madras to repair his damages.

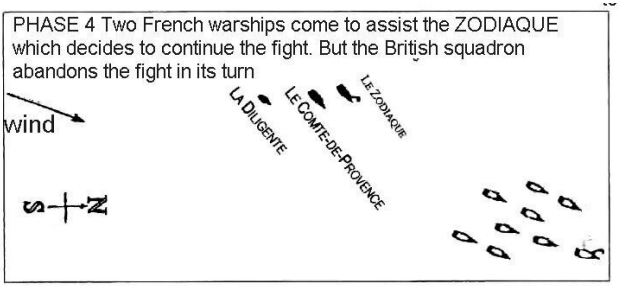


Casualties & Losses ● No ships were sunk on either side. On the French side, Le BIEN-AIMÉ suffered some damage; on the English side, most of the masts were damaged.

Consequence of this English defeat: This victory allowed the French to break the blockade and thus to bring logistical reinforcements to the East-Indies.

Sources & Readings ●Mahé de La Bourdonnais, gouverneur gênerai des îles de France et de Bourbon, 1699-1753. Pierre Crépin, Éditions Leroux, Paris, 1922. ●View of the Origin and Conduct of the War with Tippoo Sultan, A. Alexander, London, 1800. ●A Narrative of the Campaign in India wkich terminated the War with Tippoo Sultan in 1792, Major AJexander Dirom, London, 1793, New Delhi, Asian Educational Services, 1985. ●Indo-French Relations, K.S. Mathew & S. Jeyaseela Stephen, B. Sheik Ali, 'French Relations with Haidar Ali and Tipou

Sultan; and Jean Marie Lafont, ‘‘Observations on the French Military Presence in the Indian States, 1750-1849’‘, Delhi, Pragati Publications, 1999.



Battle of Tranquebar.

Date of the Action: August 1758.

Other name: Negapatam.

Location: In India; on the Coromandel coast. Geographical co-ordinates: 11° 02' North & 79° 51' East.

Military Forces involved ●

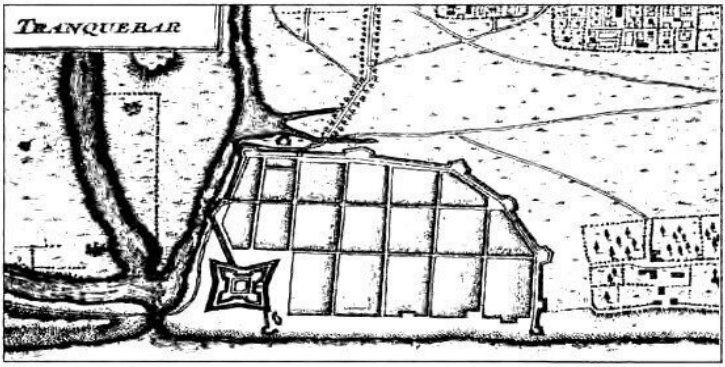
Battle of Tranquebar	
French Squadron	**British Squadron**
1-Le ZODIAQUE 74, warship, d'Aché 2-Le VENGEUR 54, merchant indiaman 3-Le BIEN-AIMÉ 58, indiaman 4-Le CONDÉ 44, indiaman 5-Le St-LOUIS 50, indiaman 6-Le MORAS 44, indiaman 7- Le DUC D'ORLEANS 50 indiaman 8-Le DUC-DE-BOURGOGNE 60, m s 9- Le SYLPHIDE 36, indiaman	1-HMS YARMOUTH 64, 2-HMS ELIZABETH 64, 3-HMS CUMBERLAND 66, 4-HMS WEYMOUTH 60, 5-HMS TIGER 60, 6-HMS NEWCASTLE 50, 7-HMS SALISBURY 50, + frigates
One warship + 8 merchands	7 warships + frigates

Conflict: Seven Years' War [1756-1763].

Context: On 28 July, the Comte d'Aché left Pondichéry and on 1st August came upon an English squadron off Tranquebar.

Military Leaders in command ●*French*: Admiral-Comte Anne Antoine d'Aché (1701-1780). The d'Aché family had given four general officers to the Kingdom of France, most notably Guillaume d'Aché de Serquigny (c. 1647-1713), a squadron leader who was himself closely related to Vice-Admiral de Tourville. *British*:●Admiral George August Pocock. Pocock was born in Thames Ditton in Surrey, the son of Thomas Pocock, a chaplain in the Royal Navy. His great grandfather was Rev. Dr. Laurence Pocock, Rector of Brightwalton in Berkshire (1706-1792)

Strategy** or **tactics: parallel lines and cannonade. The sea theorist, Admiral Castex, wrote of this period: "From 1756 to 1759, our squadrons ceased to appear at sea. As a result, it was the English who had a free hand[4]. Yet, that merchant ships could manage to outwit a Royal Navy squadron was already a victory.



Summary of the action: The battle lasted about two hours. The two squadrons in parallel linear formations cannonaded each other stubbornly. It seems surprising that merchant ships could have held out for so long against warships. According to an English historian, D'Aché broke off the fight after two hours of effort and was only saved by the superior navigational skills of the French ships.

Casualties & Losses ●Light damage. The number of killed is not known on either side.

Consequence of this French defeat: On 2nd August, D'Aché and the French squadron were back at Pondichéry. This battle can be compared to the battle of Poulo-Aor (14 February 1804) in which English merchant ships (indiamen) armed with 700 guns in all held in check a French squadron of war armed with 192 cannons.

Sources & Readings ●Letters from Mauritius in the Eighteenth Century [...] including an account of La Bourdonnais' capture

[4] ●*Théories stratégiques*, amiral Raoul Castex, Société d'édition géographique maritime et coloniale, Paris, 1929, p. 160.

of Madras, Charles Grant, Introduction by Sir John Pope Hennessy. K.C.M.G., published in Mauritius, 1886, ●France-Angleterre: le grand corps-à-corps maritime, Pierre de La Condamine, France-Empire, Paris, no date. ●The narrative of William Spavens, a Chatham pensioner, a unique lower deck view of the Navy of the Seven Year's War, written by himself, Chatham Publ., London, no date. ●The Hawke papers: a selection, 1745-1771, by Ruddock F. Mackay, Scolar press, for the Navy records Society, Aldershor, UK, 1990.

Naval battle of Lagos.

Date of the action: 17th-18th August 1759.

Location; Southern coast of Portugal. Geographical coordinates: 37°06' north latitude and 08°40' west longitude. Not to be confused with the capital of Nigeria, on the Gulf of Benin, founded and named by the Portuguese.

Conflict: Seven Years War [1756-1763].

Context: Admiral Hawke blockaded Brest, from May to November 1759, in order to prevent the Brest squadron from leaving and joining up with the Toulon squadron. The squadron leader of La Clue succeeded in getting out of the Mediterranean against the English squadrons of Broderick and Boscawen who were blockading the port of Toulon. Joined by Boscawen on 17th August 1759, as soon as they had passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, part of La Clue's forces[5] found refuge in Cadiz. Seven ships were left alone, battling 14 English vessels.

Military leaders in command ●*French*: La Clue was the squadron leader. ●*English*: Admiral Edgard Boscawen, son of the Viscount of Falmouth.

Military Forces involved ●*French*: twelve French vessels. ●*English*: seventeen English vessels.

Strategy or Tactics: Captain Sabran sacrificed himself in vain to cover the retreat of his comrades with Le CENTAURE. Only two were able to escape; two were taken; two threw themselves to the shore. It is worth noting that the British approach was made without a flag so that the French would not be suspicious and, therefore, would not prepare for battle.

[5] ●Three ships of the line and three frigates.

Battle of Lagos off Gibraltar - 1759	
ROYAL NAVY	MARINE ROYALE
1-NAMUR 90, adm. E.Boscawen 2-PRINCE 90, v/a T. Broderick 3-NEWARK 80, William Holbourne 4-WARSPITE 74, Capt John Bentley 5-CULLODEN 74, Capt Smith Callis 6-CONQUEROR 70, William LLoyd 7-SWIFTSURE 70, Thomas Stanhope 8-EDGAR 64, Capt. FW Drake 9-St. ALBANS 64, Capt. E. Vernon 10-INTREPID 60, Capt. E. Pratten 11-AMERICA 60, Capt. J.Kirke 12-PRINCESS-LOUISA 60, R. Harland 13-JERSEY 60, Capt. John Barker 14-GUERNSEY 50, Lieut. M. Kearny 15-PORTLAND 50, Capt. J. Maplesden 16-AMBUSCADE 40, Capt R. Gwynn 17-RAINBOW 40, Christopher Basset	1-L'OCÉAN 80, c/e Monsieur de La Clue 2-LE REDOUTABLE 74, 3-LE CENTAURE 74, 4-Le TÉMÉRAIRE 74, Capt.Castillon 5-Le MODESTE 64, Lac Montvert 6-Le SOUVERAIN 74, 7-Le GUERRIER 74, 8-Le FANTASQUE 64, 9-Le LION 64, 10-Le TRITON 64, 11-Le FIER 50, 12-L'ORIFLAMME 50
Frigates: SHANNON 36, ACTIVE 36, THETIS 32, LYME 24, GIBRALTAR 24, GLASGOW 24, SHEERNESS 24, TARTAR'S PRIZE 24, FAVOURITE 16, GRAMONT 16, ÆTNA, SALAMANDER. Source: W. L. Clows, vol. III, p.212	**Frigates**: CHIMÈRE 26, MINERVE 24, GRACIEUSE 24.

Summary of the action: Admiral Boscawen was blockading Toulon[6] where La Clue's squadron was located[7], which the English believed would help invade England, the eternal nightmare of the English throughout the centuries, since the French invasion of 1066. Boscawen ordered —not without some inconsistency— three ships of the line, the CONQUEROR, the CULLODEN[8] [Captain Harland] and the JERSEY [Captain Barker] to make an incursion into the large Toulon roadstead and to burn two French merchants at anchor. The three ships of the line did

[6] ●With about fifteen ships of the line and several frigates.
[7] ●A dozen ships of the line and three frigates.
[8] ●This ship's name commemorated the final crushing of the Scots by the English; which showed little respect for the many Scots who fought in Lagos and elsewhere under the folds of the "British" flag.

so, but were immediately fired upon by shore batteries, some of which had not yet been unmasked. The English ships tried to fire back, but were soon reduced to half wrecks and had to be towed by their own boats.

Faced with this catastrophe, Boscawen sailed off to Gibraltar to repair his damage, leaving only 12 ships in Toulon. Thus, the situation was reversed and when the French squadron of 14 ships of the line left the port, it was this time the ships of the Royal Navy which not only did not dare to oppose it, but also abandoned their blockade post.

On hearing in Gibraltar that La Clue had left Toulon, Boscawen sent an observation frigate[9] to cruise towards Malaga and the frigate GIBRALTAR [20 guns] to the coast of Granada and Ceuta[10] to find out when La Clue would pass through the Straits. The French squadron was spotted at 8:00 p.m. on 17th August by the frigate GIBRALTAR, not far from the Barbary coast[11]. La Clue was heading towards the Strait. The frigate immediately informed the English squadron.

At about 7 a.m. on 18 August, Boscawen spotted the French and gave the signal for the attack. At first, La Clue mistook the English squadron, which had not hoisted its colours in order to give the impression that it was his own ships, from which he had become separated during the night. When he realised the misunderstanding and that the French were one against two[12], he hoisted all the sails and decamped. The French squadron, or at least what was left of it, could have outrun the English if it had not had to hang up Le SOUVERAIN [74 guns] which was too heavy to be fast.

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[9] ●The LYME, a 20-gun fugitive.

[10] ●On the African coast, one of the two Columns of Hercules; the other being the Rock of Gibraltar.

[11] ●Or Berberia, i.e. Moroccan. The word Berber is a corruption of barbarian. This last word is a pejorative onomatopoeia which in antiquity referred to those languages which were incomprehensible to all those who did not speak Greek. The Greeks, so proud also denigrated the great Egyptian architectural works by calling them "cakes of honey and flour'' [pyramid] or "roasting spit'' [obelisk]

[12] ●If one takes into account the absence of a division.

By noon the good breeze had disappeared and it was not until about 14:00 p.m. that the best Englishmen reached Le SOUVERAIN, which formed the rear guard. Passing in front of the latter, The NAMUR [90 guns], the enormous flagship of the English squadron leader, received a full broadside from Le SOUVERAIN. On The NAMUR, Boscawen went on to catch up with L'OCÉAN, La Clue's flagship.

At about 16:00 p.m., The NAMUR [90 guns] reached L'OCÉAN [80 guns]; they threw themselves on each other and simultaneously and reciprocally hit their sides with a terrible 40 or 45 gun broadside. A furious battle ensued between the two flagships despite the difference in armament which favoured the English. This artillery inferiority was to be felt in the first 30 minutes, as the gunners aimed at the mast to immobilise the enemy[13]. During this short period of time, the French lost their foremast. Then her mainmast and mizzenmast came down on the deck with a frightening crash, killing several sailors in its fall. The fight continued. Le CENTAURE[14] 74 was so badly damaged by the planking of each ship which was doubling up on her, without being able to respond to the first, as well as by the long fight which followed, that she was obliged to cease the fight while 200 killed and wounded cluttered her batteries and decks. The English flagship, NAMUR, was, like most of the other English ships, now so badly damaged that Admiral Boscawen moved on to NEWARK (80 guns) and had his mark hoisted.

Under cover of darkness, Le SOUVERAIN 74 and Le GUERRIER 74 changed course and abandoned the confrontation[15]. At dawn, the French admiral, whose leg had been wounded by an artillery projectile, realized that the pack of English ships was still following him. He resolved to blow himself

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[13] ●Note that traditionally, the Royal Navy gunners aimed at the waterline while the French gunners destroyed the mature of their enemies; mainly.

[14] ●Captain Saban de Grammont.

[15] ●According to Boyer, the signal he sent to make known his change of course was not seen (or not understood) by the ships in the right-hand column, which continued towards Cadiz.

up rather than surrender his ship to them. Already the coast was in sight and the rising sun was lighting up the Algarve hills and the Pinhāo of the Lagos citadel. Several batteries defended the bay of Lagos, and the Frenchman thought that if he took refuge there he would be in neutral waters; but this was not so. Le TÉMÉRAIRE 74 [Captain Castillon] and Le MODESTE 64 [Captain Lac-Montvert] also anchored close to the coast instead of destroying their ship as they had been ordered to do. The OCEAN came ashore.

Fort Almadona, and the Portuguese commander of that fort fired a few cannon shots at the English pursuers. L'OCÉAN having lost her masts, La Clue had her crew disembark. The English ships threw themselves in bunchey on the French ships which were crushed under the number. Le REDOUTABLE 74 was set on fire by several ships; Le MODESTE 64,taken.

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Very informative description by André Boyer: "On 5th August 1759, taking advantage of the fact that the British squadron blockading Toulon had to return to Gibraltar to resupply and carry out the work necessary to repair the ships, the Chef d'Escadre La Clue set sail from Toulon with 12 ships and 3 frigates. On 17th August, he passed through the Strait of Gibraltar at the end of the day but his squadron was spotted by the frigate HMS GIBRALTAR posted south of the Strait. The frigate went back to Gibraltar to alert Admiral Boscawen and his officers who were ashore, invited to a dinner. The English sailors reacted very quickly. It takes only two hours for the first English ships to recover officers, sailors and set sail. The ships that had dismantled their sails, and even part of their mature sails, took only an hour to get underway. Launched in pursuit of the French squadron, they formed two groups. In front, Boscawen and eight ships, then, an hour behind, Broderick and 5 ships. The French squadron was divided into two columns. At two o'clock in the morning, La Clue decided not to join Cadiz in order not to be blocked there, and to continue northwards.

On the morning of 19th August, La Clue had only seven ships with him. He saw eight sails on the horizon behind him, and believing them to be the eight missing French ships, slowed down his own, but the lack of response to the reconnaissance signals told him it was the English. The French squadron increased its sails but, in order to remain united, had to adjust its course to the slowest ship, Le SOUVERAIN. The English fleet is getting closer. The English admiral sent out the white flag with a red cross signifying "general chase", and the French fleet was forced to accept a one-on-two fight. At about 1:00 p.m., the adversaries are within combat range. They hoist their colours. The French formed a rounded battle line. Leading the way was Le TÉMÉRAIRE, followed in order by Le MODESTE, Le REDOUTABLE, Le SOUVERAIN, L'OCÉAN, Le GUERRIER and Le CENTAURE. Twenty minutes later, Boscawen sent the signal to engage in combat. The last ship in the French line was Le CENTAURE, commanded by Sabrant-Gramont. It will fight the English ships that are coming up on both sides. Boscawen, for his part, wanted his ships not to linger in destroying the rearguard but to sail up the French line to prevent the vanguard from escaping, but some of the captains did not understand his orders, found themselves downwind of the French and were therefore unable to join the fight.

At around 4:00 p.m., Boscawen managed to get to the level of the French flagship, which knocked down his mizzen mast and the other aftermasts in half an hour. Boscawen had to transfer his flag to The NEWARK, another three-deck 90-gun ship, and abandon The NAMUR, which was almost paralized. At around 7.30 pm, Le CENTAURE, surrounded by four English ships, had no more masts and had to lower her flag. The other French ships headed north-east towards the coast. Among them, two ships, Le GUERRIER and Le SOUVERAIN, managed to escape to Rochefort and the Canaries.

On the morning of 20th August, the French admiral had only four ships left. He tried to take refuge in the bay of Almadora, near Lagos in Portugal, hoping to benefit from the

neutrality of this country to repair. At around nine o'clock in the morning, L'OCÉAN and Le REDOUTABLE ran aground near two Portuguese batteries. Le MODESTE and Le TÉMÉRAIRE dropped anchor near the shore. But Boscawen did not hesitate to violate Portuguese sovereignty to attack the four French ships. Of the two Portuguese coastal batteries, one remained silent, the other fired a few warning shots and then fell silent. The two ships at anchor were evacuated by their crews. Le MODESTE was set on fire, Le TÉMÉTAIRE captured. The two beached ships were set on fire in turn. On L'OCÉAN, not everyone had time to retreat, and a hundred sailors were taken prisoner. Admiral La Clue, wounded in the legs at the start of the battle, was able to reach the shore. The CENTAURE and Le TÉMÉRAIRE were taken back to Gibraltar. The rest of the Toulon fleet, eight ships, were stuck in Cadiz.

This latest defeat left the Marine Royale unable to compete with the Royal Navy for control of the seas. As a result (but Lévis and Murray did not yet know it[16], there was no chance of a French warship appearing in the St Lawrence in May 1760."

Casualties & Losses ● The French lost four warships of which two, Le TÉMÉRAIRE and Le MODESTE, were taken by the English. The human losses are unknown but heavy on both sides.

As a result of this French defeat, The result was that the Toulon squadron was unable to join the Conflans fleet, which on 20 November 1759 lost the Battle of the Cardinals off Brittany. Admiral de La Clue died of despair at Lagos, due to the lack of commitment of his captains, which resulted in a bitter, though strategically unimpressive, defeat. Not one of his officers lost his life in battle. This disaster was not enough to abandon the plan to invade England.

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[16]● Allusion to the Second Battle of the Plains of Abraham (also called the Battle of Sainte-Foy) which Général Lévis had just won over the English). Lévis and the Canadians hoped that a French squadron would come and re-take possession of New France.

Sources & Readings ●An Ode Occasioned by the Success of Admiral Boscawen, by a Gentleman of the University of Oxford, R. Baldwin, London, 1759. ●France-Angleterre; le grand corps-à-corps maritime, Pierre de La Condamine, France-Empire, Paris, 1987. ●England in the Seven Years' War, Julian Stafford Corbett, Greenhill Bocks Publication, London & Novato [Calif.], 1992. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London. ●Blog of historian André Boyer.

Naval Battle of Gondelour.

Other name : Battle of Porto Novo

Date of action: September 10th, 1759.

Location: Eastern or Coromandel Coast, India. Off Gondelour. Today Cuddalore. Geographic coordinates: latitude 11°74' N, 79°78' East longitude.

Conflict: Seven Years' War [1756-1763].

Background: In April, Admiral Pocock left Bombay and returned to the coast of Coromandel which he had left in October of the previous year in order to avoid the Monsoon storms. As a French squadron was expected from the Mascarene Archipelago in the near future, the British admiral decided to intercept it.

Military Forces involved[17]

FRENCH SQUADRON	BRITISH SQUADRON
1●Le ZODIAQUE 74 warship, adm d'Aché 2●L'ILLUSTRE 64, warship Capt. Ruis, 3●L'ACTIF 64,warship Capt Beauchaire 4●LA FORTUNE 64 warship Capt. Lobry 5●Le CENTAURE 74 indiaman Capt. Surville 6●COMTE-DE-PROVENCE 74 warship 7●Le VENGEUR 54 indiaman Capt. Pallière 8●DUC D'ORLÉANS 50 indiaman C. Surville 9●Le SAINT-LOUIS 50 indiaman C Joannis 10●DUC-DE-BOURGOGNE 60 Capt. Beuvet 11●Le MINOTAURE 74, Capt Egville	1● TIGER 60 Capt. Latham 2●SALISBURY 50 Capt Somerset 3●ELIZABETH 64 Capt Kemp 4●YARMOUTH 64, v/adm Pocock 5●CUMBERLAND 66 Capt Brereton 6●NEWCASTLE 56, Capt G. Legge 7●WEYMOUTH 60 Capt Vincent 8●GRAFTON 68 Capt Kemenfelt 9●SUNDERLAND 60 Capt Colville 10● armed indiaman of the BEIC 11● armed indiaman BEIC Frigates & others: QUEENSBOROUGH 24, PROTECTOR

Military leaders in command ●*English*: amiral Pocock. ●*French*: le comte d'Aché.

[17] ●Contrary to the claims of some less than rigorous historians, Le FLAMANT wasn't there.

Strategy or tactics: The French archipelago of the Mascarene Islands, which included the island of France[18], Bourbon Island and Rodrigues Island, served as a strategic stop for French logistics lines between the Metropolis and India. The battle was a long cannonade, in parallel lines. Here again, one can see how much, the powerful London Merchant Lobbies influenced British politics.

The British East India Company could use (free of charge) the vessels of the Royal Navy. This made the investments of its shareholders all the more profitable, unlike the [French] East India Company, which had to bear the costs of escorting his convoys[19].

Summary of the action: To intercept the French squadron[20], Admiral Pocock monitored the area located between Pondicherry and Negapatam. In order to renew its reserve of drinking water, the English admiral decided to sail to Trinquemalee, in Ceylon[21], because the Dutch authorities of the post of Negapatam refused to supply the English. Pocock therefore sent in

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[18] ●Today Mauricius Island. Bourbon Island became La Réunion.

[19] ●With the exception of the Napoleonic Empire, politicians of various [French] governments have consistently exhibited deep mistrust [if not outright contempt] toward merchants. This distrust has remained a defining characteristic of the French economy. This much older text illustrates the enduring disdain of the French monarchy for merchants: "His Majesty's intention [Louis XIV] is that Sieur de Bonnac [French ambassador to Spain] uphold the prerogatives of Her Majesty's subjects and ensure they enjoy the rights granted to them by treaties. However, before committing to supporting merchants' demands, he must carefully assess their legitimacy. Merchants are often inclined to complain, and if one listens to them, they readily attribute their individual grievances to the entire Nation. At times, they even present as blatant injustice the penalties they have rightfully incurred —penalties that should instead be seen as the rightful actions of those tasked with preventing fraud and enforcing the law. Her Majesty is confident that Sieur de Bonnac will be able to discern the truth, distinguish between what genuinely serves the Crown and what serves merchants' interests, protect those with legitimate grievances, and refrain from advocating for claims that are unfounded." [Compendium of Instructions given to Ambassadors and Ministers of France from the Treaties of Westphalia up to the French Revolution, vol, XII; "SPAIN", with an introduction and notes by A. Morel-Fario and H. Léonardon, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Commission des Archives; diplomatiques, 18th century), Vol.II (1701-1722), Ancienne Librairie Germer Baillière et Cie, Félix Alcan Éditeur, Paris, 1898, p. 206].

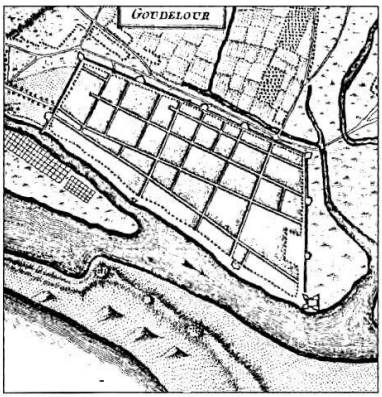
[20] ●Which was the mission he had given himself.

[21] ●Today Sri Lanka.

reconnaissance a frigate [The REVENGE] in the direction of Ceylon to monitor the arrival of the French.

In the morning of September 2nd, around 10:00 a.m., some sails were seen in the direction of the South-East and, shortly thereafter, The REVENGE appeared to be pursued by an unknown ship. The English squadron immediately hoisted their sails, but could not catch up with the enemy before night. And for various reasons, headwinds, currents, bad weather or whatever, the English ships could not act until the 10th.

The squadron announced by the unknown ship was that of the Comte d'Aché, much reinforced by transports of the French East India Company. It now consisted of only four warships, but reinforced by seven armed merchants from la Compagnie des Indes. The preparation of this logistics squadron had taken months. Supplies had been drawn not only from the Mascarene Islands but from Madagascar and even from the Cape of Good Hope. All the expenses had been largely covered by capture of a British East India Company vessel carrying a rich cargo to Madras.



The French squadron of the Comte d'Aché also conveyed fresh money in the form of diamonds[22] and reinforcements of troops intended for the French posts.

The disproportion of forces in warships was a real godsend for the English Admiral Pocock who decided to intercept the French, destroy them or force them to return home, in order to make them lose the benefit of the rich English cargo that they

[22] ●Three or four lakhs of rupees in diamonds and piastres.

had captured and which had served to defray the cost of all these supplies to the Dutch of the Cape of Good Hope.

Faced with the English squadron which expressed the desire to fight, D'Aché did not show any intention of declining the combat, although he hated the fact that he only had four warships to oppose the nine warships of the Royal Navy.

As one might expect, the battle, furious, began around 2:00 p.m. and lasted until 4:00 p.m. The two squadrons, in parallel lines, cannoned each other. D'Aché, who just wanted to pass in order to fulfill his mission of re-supplying and transporting troops destined for the French Army of the Indies, started to destroy with his cannons the masts of the English ships in order to disable them.

After two hours of fierce battle, two facts led to the end of the battle. Some French ships had gone out of the line to repair their damages when the commanding officer of Le ZODIAQUE, flagship, was killed at his command post. The officer who replaced him, immediately gave the order to leave the line of Battle to go and recover a little further. Seeing the stall, Admiral d'Aché rushed to rescind his captain's order, but before he could communicate his will, he was hit in the thigh by a blast of grapeshot and fell unconscious. At the sight of the flagship stalling, the other ships of the French line believed they were obeying the orders of their admiral by following the example of his ship. Thus the whole French squadron took the direction of Pondicherry in order to complete its mission.

The English squadron, whose masts were in too bad a state, could not continue and contented to repair its damage.

Casualties: The loss of life had to be similar. According to all historians of the two nations, the English ships suffered much more than the French: "After the engagement, no English ship could hoist half of its sail. All the French ships, except one who lacked the upper sail, kept their entire canopy."

Consequence of this English defeat: The English interception having failed and the Pondicherry supply mission accomplished

by forcing the blockade, the French rightly claimed victory. Only one English historian claimed it for Admiral Pocock by playing on the fact that the English squadron [unable to move] had remained on the spot, "master" of the battlefield.

After repairing, the English fleet somehow managed to go to Negapatam in order to carry out more consistent repairs. The French squadron reached Pondicherry five days after the battle, much to the delight of the people.

Sources & Readings ●*An Account of the War in India, between the English and the French, on the Coast of Coromandel, from the year 1750, to the year 1760; together with a Relation of the late remarkable events on the Malabar Coast, and the expeditions to Golconda and Surat* [...] illustrated with maps, plans, etc., The whole compiled from original papers, Richard Owen, Cambridge, T. Jefferys Publications, London, 1761. ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●*Colonel Lawrence's Memoirs*, Containing the History of the War in India, between the English and the French, on the Coast of Coromandel, from 1750 to 1761, 2 volumes, Amsterdam, 1766. ●*Memorial for the Earl of Lally* [...] *against Monsieur the Attorney General*, by Thomas-Arthur, comte de Lally, Imprimerie de Guillaume Desprez, Paris, 1766. ●*The Royal Navy*, Sir William Laird Clowes, Sampson Low, Marston & Company, London, 1903. 7 Vol.

Naval battle of the Cardinals.

Other names: Battle of Quiberon Bay, Battle of Conflans.

Date of the action: November 20, 1759.

Military Forces involved	
Marine Royale	***Royal Navy***
Vice-Amiral de Conflans	**Admiral Lord Edgard Hawke.**
1●Le SOLEIL ROYAL 80 guns Chézac, **2●**L'ORIENT 80, Capt. La Filière, **3●**Le GLORIEUX 74, Capt. Villars; **4●**Le ROBUSTE 74, Capt. Fragnier; **5●**Le DAUPHIN ROYAL 70, c.Urtubie; **6●**Le DRAGON 64 Capt. Le Vassor; **7●**Le SOLITAIRE 64, Capt. Langle; **8●**Le TONNANT 80, Capt. De Marges; **9●**L'INTRÉPIDE 74 Capt. Le Mercerel; **10●**Le THÉSÉE 74 Capt. Kersaint; **11●**Le SUPERBE 70 Capt. Du Tertre; **12●**Le NORTHUMBERLAND 64 Bélingant; **13●**L'ÉVEILLÉ 64 Capt. La Prévalaye; **14●**Le BRILLANT 64, Capt. Kérémar; **15●**Le FORMIDABLE 80, Capt. St-André; **16●**Le MAGNIFIQUE 74, Capt. Bigot; **17●**Le HÉROS 74, Capt. Sanzay; **18●**Le JUSTE 70, Capt. Saint-Allouam; **19●**L'INFLEXIBLE 64, Capt. Tancrède; **20●**Le BIZARRE 64, Capt. Montbazon; Frigates & corvettes L'HÉBÉ 40; L'AIGRETTE 36; La VESTALE 34; (corv.) La CALYPSO 16; (corv.) Le PRINCE-NOIR 6 TOTAL 20 ships of the line. TOTAL 20 ships of the line.[23]	**1●**The ROYAL-GEORGE 100 Capt. Campbell. **2●**The UNION 90 guns, Capt. Evans; **3●**The DUKE 80, Graves **4●**The NAMUR 90, Capt. Buckle; **5●**The MARS 74, Capt. Young; **6●**The WARSPITE 74, Capt. Bentley; **7●**The HERCULES 74, Capt. Fortescue; **8●**The TORBAY 74, Capt. Keppel; 9●The MAGNANIME 74, Capt. Howe; 10●The RESOLUTION 74, Capt. Speke; 11●The HERO 74, Capt. Edgecombe; 12●The SWIFTSURE 70, Capt. Stanhope; 13●The DORSETSHIRE 70, Capt. Denis; 14●The BURFORD 70, Capt. Gambier; 15●The CHICHESTER 70, Capt. Willet; 16●The TEMPLE 70, Capt. Shirley; 17●The ESSEX 64, Capt. O'Brien; 18●The REVENGE 64, Capt. Storr; 19●The MONTAGUE 60, Capt. Rowley; 20●The KINGSTON 60, Capt. Shirley; 21●The INTREPID 60, Capt. Maplesden; 22●The DUNKIRK 60, Capt. Digby; 23●The DEFIANCE 60, Capt. Baird; 24●The ROCHESTER 50, Capt. Duff; 25●The PORTLAND 50, Capt. Arbuthnot; 26●The FALKLAND 50, Capt. Drake; 27●he CHATHAM 50, Capt. Lockhart; Frigates The VENUS 36; The MINERVA 32, The SAPPHIRE 32; The VENGEANCE 28; The COVENTRY 28; The MAIDSTONE Capt. 28.. TOTAL 27 ships of the line.

[23]Unlike other imprecise list, le SPHINX, was not in the battle zone that day.

Location: In Quiberon Bay, Brittany, France, Geographic coordinates: 47° 29' North latitude and 03° 07' West longitude.

Conflict: Seven Years' War [1756-1763].

Context: British Admiral Hawke blockaded Brest from May to November 1759 in order to prevent the Brest squadron from leaving and re-joining the Toulon squadron with the aim, he believed, of invading England.

Military leaders in command ●*French*: vice-admiral and marshal de Conflans[24]. ●*English*: admiral Lord Edgard Hawke.

Strategy or tactics: A strange tactic which consisted of Conflans [18 ships] locking himself in a bay, thinking that its small size would prevent the English [30 ships] from venturing in; but finally, the French squadron was caught in a trap. Conflans was 69 years old and his opponent Hawke was 15 years younger. This was reflected in their respective tactics. The vanguard [seven ships] was commanded by Squadron Leader de Beaufrémont on Le TONNANT, the Corps de bataille [also seven ships] by Marshal de Conflans on Le SOLEIL-ROYAL, assisted by Squadron Leader de Guébriant de Budes on board L'ORIENT; the rear guard [seven ships] was under the command of Saint-André-du-Verger on board Le FORMIDABLE, in the distance, some English frigates were watching them.

Summary of the Action: Shortly before noon on November 14th, 1759, the Brest squadron set sail. Lacking sailors, Conflans had borrowed 3,000 or 4,000 men from the army to complete the armament of his 18 ships of the line[25].

On the 19th, around 11:00 pm, the wind being favorable, the French squadron set course to the East to present itself the next day in front of the Morbihan. Indeed, the 17,000 men of

[24] ●Count Hubert de Brienne-Conflans, 1690-1777, held the offices of marshal of France and vice-admiral concurrently. It was thought at the time that a marshal of France could only be a good admiral.
[25] ●One can imagine that these inexperienced "sailors" made poor sailors.

the Duc d'Aiguillon were waiting in Morbihan for the arrival of the transports.

At dawn on the 20th, while the French were still 140 km from Belle-Isle, sails were reported from the front. Conflans thought at first that he was dealing only with Commodore Duff's division blockading Quiberon: " General chase!" But Duff retreated in the directions of several other sails.

At 9:30 a.m., 23 ships of the line joined Duff's 7 and rushed downwind on the 18 French ships. Hawke had 30 ships against 18 for the French. The weather was also getting worse. At this moment, the French squadron was 15 nautical miles west of Belle Isle. Conflans thought that by doubling the island and the Cardinaux reefs which extend along the causeway of Hoëdic and Houat, he would find himself in a small bay where navigation would be difficult and where the English might not follow him with their 30 ships. But more was needed to stop the daring Hawkes. He ordered his squadron to engage them.

The battle began at about 2:30 p.m., across the Cardinaux, with the rear-guard division [du Verger] already shaken by the heavy seas. The French rearguard was overwhelmed by the numbers. Then the English moved up the French line and there was a general melee. Le MAGNIFIQUE 74 [Bigot de Moroges] fought for an hour against three English ships. When a third passed to leeward, Le MAGNIFIQUE opened her lower gun ports in order to use her low battery; but she then took on so much water that she had to get out of the way to escape.

Le SUPERBE 70 was less fortunate in doing the same thing. After an hour of fighting, she too tried to open her lower leeward ports to use its low artillery. She took on so much water that she capsized under sail. Le HÉROS 74 [Sansay], which was coming to the rescue of Le MAGNIFIQUE 74, was left alone to face her attackers. It lost several masts and was soon transformed into a fighting wreck. She continued to fight desperately against her attackers for two hours and finally brought her flag. But as the English prepared to moor her, she was rescued by

four French ships. Unable to maneuver, she anchored there for the night.

As for Le FORMIDABLE 80, the leader of the rearguard, he flew to the aid of his teammates, but ended up alone against all and succumbed to his numbers at 5:00 p.m. He fell into the hands of the RESOLUTION 74.

Paradoxically, during the first hour of the battle, Con flans, aboard his flagship[26], sailed ahead of the French line and continued with splendid indifference his route towards the bottom of the bay without worrying in the least about his rear guard. Finally, at about 3:30 p.m., his vanguard division [Le SOLEIL-ROYAL 80, L'ORIENT 80, Le TONNANT 80, L'INTRÉPIDE 74 and Le THÉSÉE 74] decided to make a U-turn to assist the rear guard. This half-turn caused another capsize, Le THÉSÉE [Kersaint] having turned without closing the gun ports of the lower battery. This contribution, however, put a brake on the English attack. Around 5:15 pm, the battle ended near Dumet Island. Night fell.

Three French ships had been lost, two of them by false maneuvers [capsizing]. The wreck of Le HÉROS 74, grounded and full of water, was burned by the English. Le JUSTE 70 ran aground at the mouth of the Loire, Le SOLEIL- ROYAL 80 near Le Croisic where Conflans ordered it to be burned. Le TONNANT 80, Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL 70, L'ORIENT 80, Le SOLITAIRE 64, Le NORTHUMBERLAND[27] Le BIZARRE 64, Le MAGNIFIQUE 74 and L'INTRÉPIDE reached the roadstead of Aix Island. As for L'ÉVEILLÉ, L'INFLEXIBLE, Le GLORIEUX, Le ROBUSTE, Le BRILLANT et Le DRAGON and Le SPHINX, they managed to get out of the trap and reach the mouth of the Vilaine River in the company of the frigates. As for the English, they lost two vessels beached on the Rocher du Four[28].

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[26] ●The flagship SOLEIL-ROYAL.
[27] ●An English catch or prize.
[28] ●And The RESOLUTION was dismasted.

Casualties & Losses ●*Royal Navy*: two vessels. ●*Marine Royale*: three vessels. Among the French ships that resisted most: Le THÉSÉE: 610 killed out of 630 sailors. Le SUPERBE:630 killed; Le FORMIDABLE: 300 killed. Le JUSTE: 480 killed out of 630 sailors. Le HÉROS: 200 killed. Others ships: 300 killed.

Consequence of this French defeat: England kept control of the seas for 15 years, until the Battle of Chesapeake Bay. Conflans blamed everyone but himself for his failure. He suffered the sarcasm of the entire Court of France and the contempt of the English. In England he would have been sentenced to death. In France he was declared *persona non grata* at Versailles. A pamphlet ridiculed him as follows

" *They mistook, these heroes, descendants of Thersit,*
The signal to fight for a signal to flee ! "

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Naval Battle of Ushant.

Date of action: July 27, 1778.

Location: Ouessant in French, Atlantic French Island, off the coast of France; Ushant in English. Average geographical coordinates: 48° 28' north latitude and 05° 05' west longitude. ***Conflict***: American War of Independence, 1775-1783, which the Americans called the American Revolution.

Background: The American colonials had not sooner gotten rid of the French in Canada by using Prussia and England [Seven Years' War, ended in 1763], than they used the power of France to get rid of their cumbersome motherland, England. On July 11th, 1780, French troops, sent to rescue American insurgents against England, arrived at Newport. Rochambeau[29] who commanded the French Expeditionary Force was disappointed by the number and equipment of American troops, because most of the French Financial Aid intended for the American Army was diverted by American politicians for their personal enrichment.

Military leaders in command ●*English* Admiral Keppel. ●*French*: Comte d'Orvilliers.

Strategy or tactics: Parallel battle lines and cannonades with no idea of maneuver.

Summary of the action: The whole squadron of Keppel was pushed back under Ouessant by the Comte d'Orvilliers' French squadron strong of 32 ships-of-the-line and 16 frigates.

Military Forces involved ●30 and 32 ships of the line and 16 frigates on either side.

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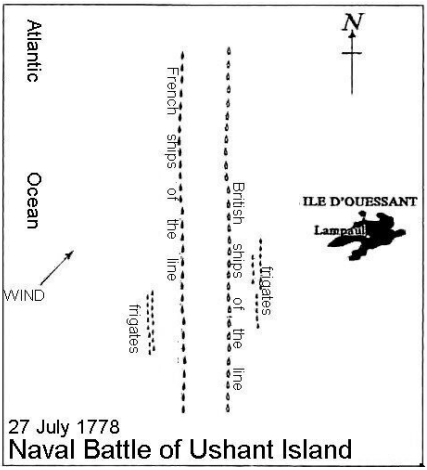
[29] ●Jean-Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau, maréchal de France, born in Vendôme in 1725. He died in "Thôré" in 1807. It was his brother Donatien who took command of the French Expeditionary Force in Haiti when General Leclerc was killed.

BATTLE OF USHANT[30]	
Marine Royale	**Royal Navy**
1-La COURONNE 80, l/g Duchaffault 2-DUCDEBOURGOGNE80, Rochechouart 3-Le GLORIEUX 74, Capt.c/e Beaunes 4-Le PALMIER 74, Capt. De Réals 5-Le BIEN-AIMÉ 74, Capt. Aubenton 6-Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL 70, C. Nieuil 7-Le VENGEUR 64, Capt. Amblimont 8-L'ALEXANDRE 64, Capt. Trémigon 9-L'INDIEN 64, Capt. de La Grandière 10-Le SAINT-MICHEL 60, Grenouilli 11-L'AMPHION 50, Capt. Trobriant 12-Le BRETAGNE 110, d'Orvilliers 13-Le VILLE DE PARIS 100, Guichen 14-L'ORIENT 74, c. d'escadre Hector 15-Le FENDANT 74, Capt. Vaudreuil 16-Le MAGNIFIQUE 74, Capt. Brach 17-L'ACTIF 74, Capt. Thomas d'Orves 18-Le RÉFLÉCHI 64, Capt. Suville 19-L'ÉVEILLÉ 64, Capt. Bot-Dern 20-L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Capt. des Touches 21-L'ACTIONNAIRE 64, Capt. Proissi 22-Le SAINT-ESPRIT80,Motte Picqu. 23-Le ROBUSTE 74, Capt.Grasse-Tilly 24-Le CONQUÉRANT 74, C. Monteil 25-L'INTRÉPIDE 74, Capt. Beaumier 26-Le ZODIAQUE 74, Porte-Vezins 27-Le DIADÈME 74, Capt.Cardonnie 28-Le SOLITAIRE 64, Bricqueville 29-Le ROLAND 64, Capt. L'Archantel 30-Le SPHINX 64, Capt. de Soulanges 31-Le TRITON 64, Capt.Ligondès 32- Le FIER 50, Capt. De Turpin **Frigates** etc: SENSIBLE 32, ANDROMAQUE 32, SINCÈRE 32, JUNON 32, IPHIGÉNIE 32, NYMPHE 32, SURVEILLANTE 16, PERLE 16, ÉCUREUIL 14, HIRONDELLE 16, SERIN 14, CURIEUSE 4, FAVORITE 10.	1-MONARCH 74, Capt. J. Rowley 2-HECTOR 74, Capt. John Hamilton 3-CENTAUR 74, Capt. Phillips Cosby 4-EXETER 64, Capt. John Pleydell Nott 5-DUKE 90, Capt. William Brereton 6-QUEEN 90, v/a Robert Harland 7-SHREWBURY 74, Capt. J. L. Roas 8-CUMBERLAND 74, Capt. J. Peyton 9-BERWICK 74, Capt. K. Stewart 10-STIRLING CASTLE 64, C. Douglas 11-COURAGEUX 74, Capt. Mulgrave 12-THUNDERER 74, Capt. R. B. W. 13-SANDWICH 90, Capt. R. Edwards 14-VALIANT 74, Capt. J. L. Gower 15-BIENFAISANT 64, Capt. Macbride 16-VICTORY 100, adm. A. Keppel 17-FOUDROYANT 80, Capt. J.Jervis 18-PRINCE-GEORGE 90, J. Lindsay 19-VIGILANT 64, Capt. R. Kingsmill 20-TERRIBLE 74, Capt. R. Bickerton 21-VENGEANCE 74, M. Clements 22-WORCESTER 64, Capt. Robinson 23-ELIZABETH 74, Capt. F. Maitland 24-ROBUST 74, Capt. A. Hood 25-FORMIDABLE 90, Capt. H.Palliser 26-OCEAN 90, Capt. John Laforey 27-AMERICA 64, Capt. L. Longford 28-DEFIANCE 64, Capt. S. Goodall 29-EGMONT 74, Capt. J. Allen 30-RAMILLIES 74, Capt. R. Digby **Frigates** etc: ARETHUSA 32, PROSERPINE 28, MILFORD 28, FOX 28, ANDROMEDA 28, LIVELY 20, (fs)PLUTO 8, (fs)VULCAN 8, ALERT 12
TOTAL: 32 ship, 2245 guns +282 guns	**TOTAL: 30ships, 2278 guns +192 guns**

[30] ●Source: William Laird Clowes, Vol.III, p.415.

The battle began around 11:00 a.m. on July 27th, lasted three and a half hours and ended without a clear conclusion, although it was Keppel who abandoned the battlefield to the French. Both enemies had missed the opportunity to destroy each other's rearguard. In fact, d'Orvilliers had only minor damage, while the English had a dozen ships in very poor condition at the end of the battle. One of them was about to capitulate when he was rescued by another ship. At last, the English squadron abandoned the battlefield and withdrew, because, the English admiral said: "The state in which my ships found themselves left me no choice. "



Casualties & Losses ●A dozen damaged English vessels.

Consequence of this English defeat: This victory kept intact the logistical lines between France and the French Expeditionary Force of Rochambeau, and the American army of George Washington (and La Fayette). Remembering the execution of Admiral Byng for a similar fact, Keppel blamed his failure on Sir Hugh Palliser, his subordinate at sea, but who was *a member in good standing* of the Admiralty Council (Admiralty Board). (By the way, Palliser had been a member of the Court-Martial that sentenced Admiral Byng to be shot for having been defeated on sea by the French.) Press recriminations led Keppel to Court-Martial for gross negligence and Palliser for insubordination. The case quickly loomed. The Whigs regarded the accusations against Keppel as a stain on the career of Prime Minister Lord North. The Court-Martial, unwilling to aggravate the

situation, acquitted both accused. But Keppel was dismissed from command in 1779. He then embarked into politics and became... *First Lord of the Admiralty* three years later, after the English final defeats at the hands of the French brought down Lord North's government.

Sources & Readings ●Sea Kings of Britain..., par G.A.R. Callender, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1911. ●Some say that we won. They run and we run [song written about last engagement of the Duc de Chartres and Admiral Keppel, on 27th July 1778 off Ushant], London, 1778. ●How the Jubilee Fleet Escaped Destruction, and The Battle of Ushant; or two episodes in the career of a naval officer, Philip L. Stevenson, Simpkin, Marshall & Co., London, 1899. ●Lettre d'un Officier de l'Année Navale de France à M. l'Amiral Keppel, Brest et Londres, 1778.

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ANNEX

Controversy over two British senior officers trying to shift the blame for the defeat: onto the other. Here is the description of the battle[31] to explain the English controversy about the responsibilities for this British defeat.

"Keppel so far had made no signal for the line of battle, nor did he know. Recognizing from the four days' chase that his enemy was avoiding action, he judged correctly that he should force it, even at some risk. It was not the time for a drillmaster, nor a parade. Besides, thanks to the morning signal for the leewardly ships to chase, these, forming the rear of the disorderly column in which he was advancing, were now well to windward, able therefore to support their comrades, if needful, as well as to attack the enemy.

In short, practically the whole force was coming into action, although much less regularly than might have been desired. What was to follow was a rough-and-ready fight, but it

[31] ●From William Clowes, Volume III, p.417 ff.

was all that could be had, and better than nothing. Keppel therefore simply made the signal for battle, and that just as the firing began. The collision was so sudden that the ships at first had not their colours flying.

The French also, although their manœuvres had been more methodical, were in some confusion. It is not given to a body of thirty ships, of varying qualities, to attain perfection of movement in a fortnight of sea practice. The change of wind had precipitated an action, which one admiral had been seeking, and the other shunning; but each had to meet it with such shift as he could. The British being close-hauled, the French, advancing on a parallel line, were four points[32] off the wind. Most of their ships, therefore, could have gone clear to windward of their opponents, but the fact that the latter could reach some of the leaders compelled the others to support them.

As d'Orvilliers had said, it was hard to avoid an enemy resolute to fight. The leading three French vessels[33] hauled their wind, in obedience to the admiral's signal to form the line of battle, which means a close-hauled line. The effect of this was to draw them gradually away from the British, and, if imitated by their followers, to render the affair a mere touch at a single point — indecisive.

The fourth French ship began the action, opening fire soon after eleven. The vessels of the opposing fleets surged by under short canvas, firing as opportunity offered, but necessarily much handicapped by smoke, which prevented the clear sight of an enemy, and caused anxiety lest an unseen friend might receive a broadside. "The distance between the FORMIDABLE, 90 [Captain Palliser], and the EGMONT, 74 [Capt Allen], was so short," testified Captain John Laforey, whose three-decker, the OCEAN, 90, was abreast and outside this interval, "that it was with difficulty I could keep betwixt them to engage,

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[32] ●Forty-five degrees.

[33] ●Chevalier says, p.89: "The English passed out of range" of these ships. As these ships had the wind, they had the choice of range, barring signal. In truth, they were obeying his order.

without firing upon them, and I was once very near on board the EGMONT".

The FORMIDABLE, Palliser's flagship, kept her mizzen topsail aback much of the time, to deaden her way, to make room for the Ocean, and to allow the ships behind her to close. "At a quarter past one," testified Captain Maitland of the ELIZABETH, 74, "we were very close behind the FORMIDABLE, and a midshipman upon the poop called out that there was a ship coming on board on the weather bow. I put the helm up… and found, when the smoke cleared away, I was shot up under The FORMIDABLE's lee. She was then engaged with the two last ships in the French fleet, and, as I could not fire at them without firing through The FORMIDABLE, I was obliged to shoot on."[34] Captain Bazely, of The FORMIDABLE, says of the same incident, "The FORMIDABLE did at the time of action bear up to one of the enemy's ships, to avoid being aboard of her, whose jib boom nearly touched the main topsail weather leech of the FORMIDABLE. I thought we could not avoid being on board."

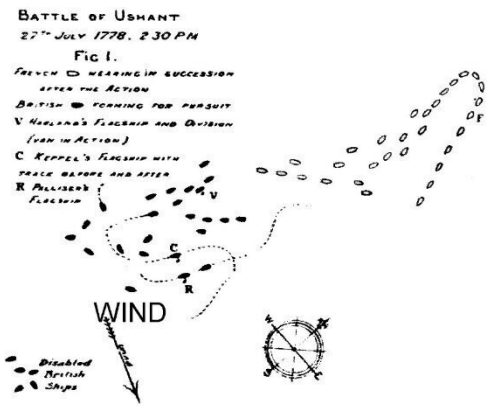
Contrary to the usual result, the loss of the rear division, in killed and wounded, was heaviest, nearly equaling the aggregate of the other two[35]. This was due to the morning signal to chase to windward, which brought these ships closer than their leaders. As soon as the British van, ten ships, had passed the French rear, its commander, Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Harland, anticipating Keppel's wishes, signaled it to go about and follow the enemy (Fig. 1, V).

As the French column was running free, these ships, when about, fetched to windward of its wake. As the VICTORY drew out of the fire, at 1:00 P.M., Keppel made a similar signal, and attempted to wear the injuries to his rigging not permitting tacking; but caution was needed in maneuvering across the bows of the following ships, and it was not till 2:00 p.m., that the

[34] ●This evidence of the captains of the OCEAN and the ELIZABETH contradicts Palliser's charge that his ship was not adequately supported.
[35] ●It was actually quite equal, but this was due to an accidental explosion on board the FORMIDABLE.

VICTORY was about on the other tack, heading after the French. At this time, 2:00 p.m., just before or just after wearing, the signal for battle was hauled down, and that for the line of battle was hoisted. The object of the latter was to re-form the order, and the first was discontinued, partly because no longer needed, chiefly that it might not seem to contradict the urgent call for a re-formation[36].

At this time six or seven of Harland's division were on the weather bow of the VICTORY, to windward (westward), but a little ahead, and standing like her after the French; all on the port tack (Fig. 1). None of the centre division succeeded in joining the flagship at once (Fig. 1, C). At 2:30 Palliser's ship, the FORMIDABLE, on the starboard tack passed her to leeward, the last of the fleet apparently out of action (Fig. 1, R). A half-hour after this the VICTORY had been joined by three of the centre, which were following her in close order, the var] remaining in the same relative position. Astern of these two groups were a number of other ships in various degrees of confusion,—some going about, some trying to come up, others completely disabled. Especially, there was in the south-south-east, therefore well to leeward, a cluster of four or five British vessels, evidently temporarily incapable of maneuvering.

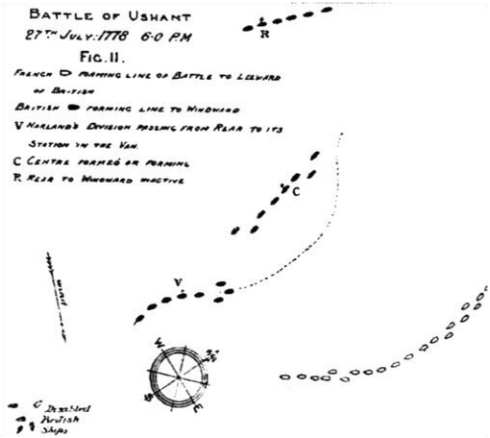


This was the situation which met the eye of the French admiral, scanning the field as the smoke drove away. The

[36] ●Naval officers will observe the strong analogy to the speculative naval tactics of today, — a charge through (or by), and a re-formation afterwards.

disorder of the British, which originated in the general chase, had increased through the hurry of the manœuvres succeeding the squall, and culminated in the conditions just described. It was an inevitable result of a military exigency confronted by a fleet only recently equipped.

The French, starting from a better formation, had come out in better shape. But, after all, it seems difficult wholly to remedy the disadvantage of a policy essentially defensive ; and d'Orvilliers' next order, though well conceived, was resultless. At 1:00 p.m.[37] he signalled his fleet to wear in succession, and form the line of battle on the starboard tack (Fig. 1, F). This signal was not seen by the leading ship, which should have begun the movement. The junior French admiral, in the fourth ship from the van, at length went about, and spoke the Bretagne, to know what was the commander-in-chief's desire. D'Orvilliers explained that he wished to pass along the enemy's fleet from end to end, to leeward, because in its disordered state there was a fair promise of advantage, and by going to leeward — presenting his weather side to the enemy — he could use the weather lower-deck guns, whereas, in the then state of the sea, the lee ports could not be opened. Thus explained, the movement was



[37] ●Chevalier. Probably later by the other times used in this account.

executed, but the favourable moment had passed. It was not till 2.30 that the manoeuvre was evident to the British.

As soon as Keppel recognized his opponent's intention, he wore the VICTORY again, a few minutes after 3:00 P.M., and stood slowly down, on the starboard tack *off the wind*, towards his crippled ships in the south-south-east, keeping aloft the signal for the line of battle, which commanded every manageable ship to get to her station (Fig.2, C). As this deliberate movement was away from the enemy, Palliser tried afterwards to fix upon it the stigma of flight, —a preposterous extravagancy. Harland put his division about at once and joined the Admiral. On this tack his station was ahead of the VICTORY, but in consequence of a message from Keppel he fell in behind her, to cover the rear until Palliser's division could repair damage and take their places.

At 4:00 p.m. Harland's division was in the line. Palliser's ships, as they completed refitting, ranged themselves in rear of the FORMIDABLE, their captains considering, as they testified, that they took station from their divisional commander, and not from the ship of the commander-in-chief. There was formed thus, on the weather quarter of the Victory, and a mile or two distant, a separate line of ships, constituting on this tack the proper rear of the fleet, and dependent for initiative on Palliser's flagship (Fig. 2, R).

At 5 p.m. Keppel sent word by a frigate to Palliser to hasten into the line, as he was only waiting for him to renew the action, the French now having completed their maneuver. They had not attacked, as they might have done, but had drawn up under the lee of the British, their van abreast the latter's center. At the same time Harland was directed to move to his proper position in the van, which he at once did (Fig. 2, V). Palliser made no movement, and Keppel with extraordinary —if not culpable— forbearance, refrained from summoning the rear ships into line by their individual pennants.

This he at last did about 7:00 p.m., signaling specifically to each of the vessels then grouped with Palliser (except the

FORMIDABLE), to leave the latter and take their posts in the line. This was accordingly done, but it was thought then to be too late to renew the action.

At daylight the next morning, only three French ships were in sight from the decks; but the main body could be seen in the south-east from some of the mastheads and was thought to be from fifteen to twenty miles distant.

Though absolutely indecisive, this was a pretty smart skirmish; the British loss being 133 killed and 373 wounded, that of the French 161 killed and 513 wounded. The general result would appear to indicate that the French, in accordance with their usual policy, *had fired to cripple their enemy's spars and rigging*, the motive-power…

As the smoke thickened and confusion increased, the fleets had got closer together, and, whatever the intention, many shot found their way to the British hulls. Nevertheless, as the returns show, *the French hit were to the British nearly as 7 to 5. On the other hand, it is certain that the maneuvering*[38] *power of the French after the action was greater than that of the British.*

Both sides claimed the advantage. This was simply a point of honour, or of credit, for material advantage accrued to neither. Keppel had succeeded in forcing d'Orvilliers to action against his will; *d'Orvilliers, by a well-judged evolution, had retained a superiority of manœvring power after the engagement.* Had his next signal been promptly obeyed, he might have passed again by the British fleet, in fairly good order, before it re-formed, and concentrated his fire on the more leewardly of its vessels. Even under the delay, it was distinctly in his power to renew the fight; and that he did not do so forfeits all claim to victory. *Not to speak of the better condition of the French ships*, Keppel, by running off the wind, had given his opponent full opportunity to reach his fleet and to attack. *Instead of so doing,*

[38] ●Old English spelling (for example that of the historian William Clowes) closer to French.

d'Orvilliers drew up under the British lee, out of range, and offered battle; a gallant defiance, but to a crippled foe.

Time was thus given to the British to refit their ships sufficiently to bear down again. This the French admiral should not have permitted. He should have attacked promptly, or else have retreated; to windward, or to leeward, as seemed most expedient. *Under the conditions, it was not good generalship to give the enemy time, and to await his pleasure. Keppel, on the other hand, being granted this chance, should have renewed the fight; and here arose the controversy which set all England by the ears,* and may he said to have immortalized this otherwise trivial incident.

Palliser's division was to windward from 4:00 to 7:00 pm, while *the signals were flying to form line of battle,* and to bear down in the Admiral's wake; and Keppel alleged that, had these been obeyed by 6:00 pm, he would have renewed the battle, having still over two hours of daylight. It has been stated already that, besides the signals, a frigate brought Palliser word that the Admiral was waiting only for him.

The immediate dispute is of slight present interest, except as an historical link in the fighting development of the British Navy; and only this historical significance justifies more than a passing mention. ***In 1778 men's minds were still full of Byng's execution in 1757***, and of the Mathews and Lestock affair in 1744, which had materially influenced Byng's action off Minorca. Keppel repeatedly spoke of himself as on trial for his life; and he had been a member of Byng's court-martial. The gist of the charges against him, preferred by Palliser, was that he attacked in the first instance without properly forming his line, for which Mathews had been cashiered; and, secondly, that by not renewing the action after the first pass-by, and by wearing away from the French fleet, he had not done his utmost to " take, sink, burn, and destroy "— the latter, the charge on which Byng was shot. Keppel, besides his justifying reasons for his course in general, alleged and proved his full intention to attack again, had not Palliser failed to come into line, a delinquency the same

as that of Lestock, which caused Mathews's ruin. In other words, men's minds were breaking away from, but had not thrown off completely, the tyranny of the Order of Battle, — one of the worst of tyrannies, because founded on truth. Absolute error, like a whole lie, is open to speedy detection; half-truths are troublesome.

The Order of Battle was an admirable servant and a most objectionable despot. *Mathews, in despair over a recalcitrant second, cast off the yoke, engaged with part of his force, was ill supported, and cashiered; Lestock escaping. Byng, considering this, and being a pedan*t by nature, would not break his line ; the enemy slipped away, Minorca surrendered, and he was shot. In Keppel's court-martial, twenty-eight out of the thirty captains who had been in the line were summoned as witnesses. Most oi them swore that if Keppel had chased in line of battle that day, there could have been no action, and the majority of them cordially approved; but there was evidently an undercurrent still of dissent, and especially in the rear ships, where there had been some of the straggling inevitable in such movements, and whose commanders therefore had uncomfortable experience of the lack of mutual support, which the line of battle was meant to insure.

Another indication of still surviving pedantry was the obligation felt in the rear ships to take post behind their own admiral, and to remain there when the signals for the line of battle, and to bear down in the admiral's wake, were flying. *Thus Palliser's own inaction, to whatever cause due, paralysed the six or eight sail with him*; but it appears to the writer that Keppel was seriously remiss in not summoning those ships by their own pennants, as soon as he began to distrust the purposes of the Vice-Admiral, instead of delaying doing so till 7 p. m., as he did. It is a curious picture presented to us by the evidence. The Commander-in-Chief, with his staff and the captain of the ship, fretting and fuming on the VICTORY's quarter-deck; the signals flying which have been mentioned; Harland's division getting into line ahead ; and four points on the weather quarter,

only two miles distant, so that "every gun and port could be counted," a group of seven or eight sail, among them the flag of the third in command, apparently indifferent spectators.

The Formidable s only sign of disability was the foretopsail unbent for four hours, — a delay which, being unexplained, rather increased than relieved suspicion, rife then throughout the Navy. *Palliser was a Tory, and had left the Board of Admiralty to take his command. Keppel was so strong a Whig* that he would not serve against the Americans; and he evidently feared that he was to be betrayed to his ruin.

Palliser's defense rested upon three principal points: (**1**), *that the signal for the line of battle was not seen on board the* FORMIDABLE ; (**2**), *that the signal to get into the Admiral's wake was repeated by himself*; (**3**), *that his foremast was wounded, and, moreover, found to be in such bad condition that he feared to carry sail on it*. As regards the first, the signal was seen on board the OCEAN, next astern of and *not far from*[39] the FORMIDABLE; for the second, the Admiral should have been informed of a disability by which a single ship was neutralising a division. The frigate that brought Keppel's message could have carried back this. *Thirdly*, the most damaging feature to Palliser s case was that he asserted that, after coming out from under fire, he wore at once towards the enemy; afterwards he wore back again. A ship that thus wore twice before three o'clock, might have displayed zeal and efficiency enough to run two miles, off the wind[40], at five, to support a fight. Deliberate treachery is impossible. To the writer the Vice-Admiral's behaviour seems that of a man in a sulk, who will do only that which he can find no excuses for neglecting. In such cases of sailing close, men generally slip over the line into grievous wrong.

Keppel was cleared of all the charges against him; the accuser had not thought best to embody among them the delay to

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[39] ●Evidence of Captain John Laforey, of the OCEAN.

[40] ●"I do not recollect how many points I went from the wind ; I must have bore down a pretty large course." Testimony of Captain J. Laforey, of the OCEAN, on this point.

recall the ships which lie himself was detaining. Against Palliser no specific charge was preferred, but the Admiralty directed a general inquiry into his course on the 27th of July. The Court found his conduct "in many instances highly exemplary and meritorious," —he had fought well, — " but reprehensible in not having acquainted the Commander-in-Chief of his distress, which he might have done either by the Fox, or other means which he had in his power." Public opinion running strongly for Keppel, his acquittal was celebrated with bonfires and illuminations in London; the mob got drunk, smashed the windows of Palliser's friends, wrecked Palliser's own house, and came near to killing Palliser himself. The Admiralty, in 17 80, made him Governor of Greenwich Hospital.

On the 28th of July, the British and French being no longer in sight of each other, *Keppel, considering his fleet too injured aloft to cruise near the French coast, kept away for Plymouth,* where he arrived on the 31st. Before putting to sea again, he provided against a recurrence of the misdemeanour of the 27th by a general order, that " in future the Battle-line is always to be taken from the Centre.' Had this been in force before, Palliser's captains would have taken station by the Commander-in-Chief, and the FORMIDABLE would have been left to windward by herself. At the same time Howe was closing his squadron upon the centre in America; and Rodney, two years later, experienced the ill-effects of distance taken from the next ahead, when the leading ship of a fleet disregarded an order.

Although privately censuring Palliser's conduct, the Commander-in-Chief made no official complaint, and it was not until the matter got into the papers, through the talk of the fleet, that the difficulty began which resulted in the *Trial of both officers in Court-Martial*, early in the following year.

After this, Keppel, being dissatisfied with the Admiralty's treatment, intimated his wish to give up the command. The order to strike his flag was dated March 18th, 1779. He was not employed afloat again, but upon the change of

administration in 1782, he became *First Lord of the Admiralty*, and so remained, with a brief intermission, until December, 1783.

It is perhaps necessary to mention that both British and French asserted, and assert to this day, that the other party abandoned the field[41]."

[41] Clowes.

Naval Battle of Newport.

Date of action: 8th-10th August 1778.

Location: Rhode Island; United States of America. Geographic coordinates: latitude 41° 13' N and 71° 18' W.

Conflict: American War of Independence, 1775-1783.

Background: France of Louis XVI had just signed a treaty of alliance with the US Congress granting the new nation a solid military aid.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral Lord Howe. ●*Marine Royale*: Admiral d'Estaing.

Military Forces involved ●24 English warships. ●12 French warships.

Strategy or tactics: D'Estaing and Sullivan could not act immediately. While anchoring, on July 29, towards Newport, the admiral received a letter from the US general Sullivan: he was not ready, his militiamen were still at home, and he asked that they wait for him. The reason was true, we know how little the American militia had the character of regular troops; but perhaps there was a little of that jealousy of which La Fayette warned d'Estaing: "I feel that it is unfortunate for certain people to see the beautiful tirades of the play performed by foreign actors. I feel that the French are overshadowing their neighbors a little and that the beautiful plays would perhaps be reserved for them. General Sullivan's attack, though very important, would be what is called in comedy a little 'in dress,' compared with the spectacle your fleet and troops might give." The admiral consented to wait; but, as he says, "the precious moment of arrival was thus lost, that in which one amazes and in which most often nothing resists."

"We arrived until August 8th. By this date, the American army had finally been ready; the moment had come for a vigorous action. The "Old France and the Young America, campaign of Vice-Admiral d'Estaing in 1778. By G. Lacour-Gayet, Revue des Deux-Mondes volume 25, 1905. D'Estaing left Le PROTECTEUR and Le PROVENCE at sea, to prevent the arrival of any help. With the eight ships that remained, he forced the central pass, after a violent cannonade with the Newport batteries, and he anchored directly outside the range of the English fire. At this anchorage, he was joined by La SAGITTAIRE and La FANTASQUE, while a third frigate reinforced in the eastern channel the two frigates that were already there. All these movements of the 8th had been accomplished with precision and method. The general attack had been postponed until the following day 10th. Sullivan was to attack through the eastern channel under the protection of three French frigates. D'Estaing, with his ten vessels, was to attack through the central channel, of which he was master.

On the 9th, d'Estaing "had brought down landing battalions to the island of Conanicut, which he intended to maneuver for a few hours to prepare them for the general assault the next day. The weather was foggy, as it often is in this region, even in the middle of summer. With the rising sun, the fog dissipated. The admiral then discovered an unexpected sight off the coast. Le PROTECTEUR and La PROVENCE were taking refuge at full speed in the Western Channel, and a squadron of thirty-six sails, including fourteen vessels with two batteries, was approaching the coast. One can guess what had happened. Howe, who had been free since July 22nd, had left the Sandy Hook anchorage. Reinforced by several ships, he had set out in pursuit. It was the position of Sandy Hook turned upside down: us in a dead end, the English at the exit.

It is appropriate to "praise here the firmness and especially the spirit of d'Estaing. Suddenly surprised by this unfortunate setback, due primarily to Sullivan's tardiness, he did not waste

time to face the danger; his decision, his energy, his rapidity would have deserved a higher reward.

D'Estaing "used the evening of the 9th to emboss himself very strongly in the event of a direct attack by the enemy; he had at present eleven ships: le PROVENCE had joined the others. For the le PROTECTEUR, its draught had obliged her to remain in the western channel. The night was spent under arms, but without alerts. Although the prevailing winds of the season, from the south, invited the English to an attack, Howe had anchored at a certain distance from the land. On the morning of the 10th, the wind gradually shifted to the north. In an instant, d'Estaing took his decision: at half past six in the morning, the signal to be ready to sail was heard; at half past eight, it was the signal to cut the cables and sail south.

The exit was a dangerous operation. It had first to cross the Pass of Newport, where new and powerful English batteries had been erected since the day before. It was still necessary to run the risk of presenting themselves to the enemy one after the other, for the narrowness of the passage obliged them to go out in line. But, according to the word of d'Estaing, "the most disadvantageous combat was really less disadvantageous than our anchorage. The movement is carried out, by a very light wind. To show that there was nothing to fear, d'Estaing made le LANGUEDOC pass only the fifth. A few volleys were exchanged with the Newport batteries, and we passed. At sea, we were joined by Le PROTECTEUR, which had emerged from the western channel on its side. The whole squadron was reunited, except for the three frigates which had remained in the East Channel to protect Sullivan.

Howe did not expect "this bold maneuver, which was executed in just two hours. When the French fourth ship left the harbor, Howe had raised the anchorage. D'Estaing immediately set out in pursuit the same morning, at half past eleven. The wind was light, Howe was ahead of us, and our ships, it will be

remembered, were proceeding at very unequal speeds. We hunted all afternoon, then all night. The English only thought of evading and running to lock themselves up in New York. On the 11th, d'Estaing believed he was close to victory. Let's listen to him; his report to the minister is worth the most dramatic accounts.

"The wind having freshened, we were approaching them significantly. At one o'clock in the afternoon, there was no longer any doubt; we thought we were certain to reach them. The maneuvers of Lord Howe, who continued to run downwind, but closing the distance, announced that he no longer flattered himself that he could avoid combat. The wind and the sea became rougher and rougher... Our vanguard had, at three quarters past five, prolonged the English rearguard. On returning to the loft, it was engaged. The weather, which had been getting worse and foggier for four hours, showed the cruelest of gales. At six o'clock, I was forced to set the small jib and the mizzen jib to the cape. The two squadrons were hidden from each other, separated, and the hope of the most beautiful day vanished." D'Estaing intended to resume the hunt the next morning; but the night of the 11th to the 12th was almost for Le LANGUEDOC 80 the supreme night.

"At half past three in the morning, the bowsprit broke, then the foremast, then the mizzen mast, then the mainmast; finally, the mainmast fell. Then our rudder broke. This was the height of misfortune, the most terrible of all. We were only a floating mass, no longer supported by anything, and without any means of direction. This horrible turmoil lasted all day on the 12th and all night following. In afternoon of the 13th, the wind became more manageable. But then, it was a danger of a different nature. An English ship, the RENOWN, of fifty guns, came to beat le LANGUEDOC by the quarter, without rudder and without sails, which had only six cannons, soon even no more than five, capable of responding. The English cannonballs swept her from one end to the other; entered by the rear, they crossed the

batteries in all their entire length, and went to lodge themselves in the front. For some unknown reason, the RENOWN, after a few volleys, gave up its prey and disappeared.

On the advice of one of his officers, d'Estaing decided to anchor. The idea was a good one; the next day 14, at daybreak, seven ships of the squadron appeared, and soon after afterwards two more. While one tried, during this day of the 14th, to install a makeshift mast on le LANGUEDOC and to repair the other vessels, which had all suffered, d'Estaing carried his flag on L'HECTOR 74. "I yielded," he said, "to the desire to find the English." At least he was able to seize, on the 15th, a British corvette of sixteen guns. On the 17th, the repairs were more or less completed, as could be done on the open sea, and the whole squadron was reunited, except for le CÉSAR, of which there was no news. D'Estaing, returned to le LANGUEDOC 80, but ready, in case of combat, to embark on Le PROTECTEUR 74, had the anchorage lifted. If he had only consulted his urgent need for repair and rest, he would have gone to the Delaware, which was quite close, or rather Boston, because of the resources of that port. But he had promised Sullivan that he would return; above all, he had "to prove to His Majesty's new allies that we knew how to sacrifice everything to keep what had been promised. The signal was given to march north. On August 20th, after this ten-day cruise, which had been so rough, the indefatigable admiral anchored again before Rhode Island.

The situation in Newport was always the same. Sullivan had confined himself to raising batteries against the place, which were ineffective. He needed, he said, the French to give the escalation, and he requested that the French squadron resume its position in the central pass. La Fayette and General Greene went on board le LANGUEDOC to obtain d'Estaing's assistance. A Council of War was held during the day of August 21st. At the request of La Fayette for six hundred men in the name of Sullivan, the admiral replied that he was ready to provide twelve hundred on condition that he was guaranteed that

Newport would fall in two days. La Fayette could not make this commitment. Then the Council decided that the squadron could not remain any longer at anchor: two of its ships were completely dismasted; it lacked everything. The King's order was positive: to go to Boston in case of an accident or in case a superior fleet would arrive; now, le FANTASQUE 64 and le SAGITTAIRE 58 had recognized a three-decker, which could only be part of Byron's, which had recently arrived. The unanimous opinion of the Council was to go to Boston immediately to regroup and resupply. This decision was carried out immediately. On August 22nd, the entire squadron sailed. Its second anchorage off Rhode Island had lasted only twenty-four hours.

This was the third stage of the French squadron. At the Delaware, it had not seen the enemy; at Sandy Hook, it had seen him, without being able to pursue the English; at Rhode Island, the French had pursued them, without being able to reach them.

When it was seen that "Newport, which the Franco-Americans had almost taken, remained in the hands of the English, the disappointment was very strong in Sullivan's camp. This general even went so far to the point of publishing an insulting *Ordre du Jour* [agenda] for the French; he forgot that his own delays were the first and only cause of this series of setbacks [or rather, he hoped by his insults to divert the attention of his fellow citizens as far as possible from his own shortcomings and deficiencies]. D'Estaing, who had the conscience of having done his duty, did not bother to exonerate himself. He limited himself to saying that if his men and his ships, which had been at sea for many weeks, could at last enjoy a few days' rest. If he could find in Boston the refreshments and equipment which he urgently needed, he would be ready to go out again and fight "for the glory of the French name and the interests of America."

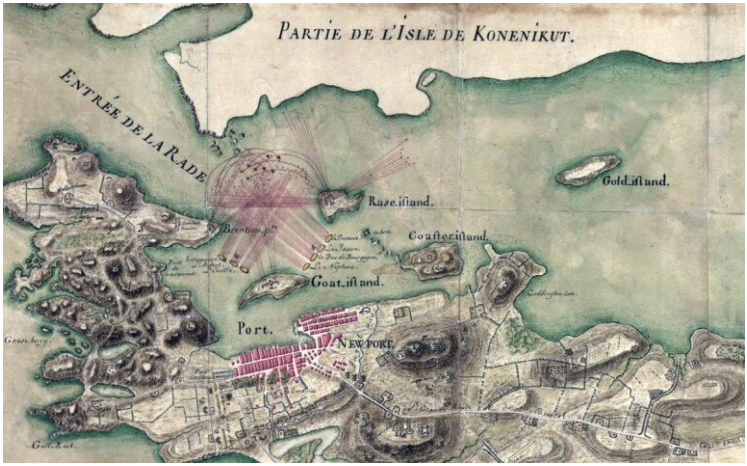
On the 8th of August 1778, "the 8 remaining French ships of the line ran the batteries on Rhode and Goat Islands, anchoring above the latter, between it and Conanicut. They were rejoined there by the 4 previously detached to the western

passage. 10,000 American troops having by this time crossed from the mainland to the northern part of Rhode Island, d'Estaing immediately landed 4,000 soldiers and seamen from the fleet upon Conanicut, for a preliminary organization. After which they also were to pass to Rhode Island and join in the operations. For the moment, therefore, the British garrison, numbering probably 6,000 men, was hemmed in by vastly superior forces, by land and by water… On the following morning [the 9th of August, 1778] Lord Howe appeared, and anchored off Point Judith, seven miles from the entrance to the Bay, and twelve from the position then occupied by the French fleet. He brought the strongest force than he had been able to gather for the defense of New York, having now one "74", seven "64", and five "50", besides several smaller vessels. But he still was greatly inferior to his French opponent, by any rational mode of naval reckoning… Immediately upon Howe's appearance, the French seamen who had landed the day before on Conanicut were recalled to their ships.

The next morning [August 10th, 1778], at 7:00 am, the wind came out strong at north-east, which is exceptional at that season. D'Estaing at once put to sea , cutting the cables in his haste. In two hours he was outside, steering for the enemy. Howe, of course, retired at once; his inferiority did not permit an engagement except on his own terms. To insure these, he needed the weather-gage, the offensive position of the day, which he expected, by keeping south, to gain, when the usual wind from that quarter should set in. The French Admiral had the same object, hoping to crush his agile opponent; and, as the sea breeze did not make that day, he succeeded in keeping the advantage with which he had started, despite Howe's skill.

At nightfall, and during the night, both fleet steered to the southward, on the port tack, with the wind variable at east. At daybreak of the 11th, they occupied nearly the same relative position, —the French north-east to north from the British, but somewhat more distant than the night before, having apparently kept closer to the wind, which by this had steadied at east-north-

east [plan aa,aa]. Howe now shifted his flag from The EAGLE 64, to The APOLLO 32, and placed himself between the two fleets, the better to decide the movements of his own. Finding it impossible to gain the weather-gage, and unwilling, probably, to be drawn too far from Rhode Island, he formed his line on the other tack, heads to the northward."



Map showing the French defenses of Newport, after the French occupied Newport in July 1780

The French continued on the port tack, under short canvas, heading to the southward and eastward, so that their bearing changed from east-north-east —directly to windward— at 6:00 am, to south-south-east at 4:00 pm, which would be nearly astern of the British. [Plan bb, bb.]. At this time their van was estimated by Howe to be two or three miles from the British rear, and according to his reading of their manœuvres, d'Estaing began to form his line for the same tack as the British, with a view of "engaging the British squadron to leeward," whereby he would obtain over it the advantage of using the lower-deck guns, the wind and sea having become much heavier. As the French admiral, in this new disposition, had put his heaviest ships in the van, and his line was nearly in the wake of the British, Howe inferred an attack upon his rear. (pna bb) He therefore ordered his heaviest ship, The CORNWALL 74, to go there

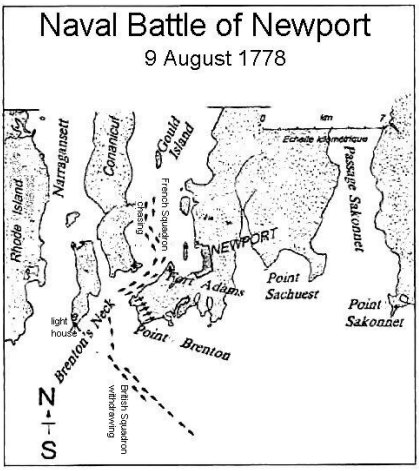
from the center, exchanging places with The CENTURION 50, and at the same time signalled the fleet to close *to the center*… It now remained simply to await firmly the moment when the French should have covered the intervening ground, and brought to action so much of his rear as d'Estaing saw fit to engage; the conditions of the sea favoring the speed of the bulkier ships that composed the hostile fleet. The latter, however, soon abandoned the attempt, and "bore away to the southward, apparently from the state of the weather, which, by the wind freshening much, with frequent rain, was now rendered very unfavorable for engaging[42]."…. D'Estaing tracked down five English Navy ships, so well that they burned themselves after throwing themselves ashore.

Summary of the action: On August 8th, a signal gave the order to the French fleet to raise anchor and put themselves in line. It was done around 3:00 p.m. The French squadron set out towards Newport. The admiral was the first of the line. As soon as they arrived within 3 km, the shore battery of Brenton's Neck began to gun Le LANGUEDOC 80 which held its fire until it was less than a kilometer from the English guns. The French gunners then opened fire and succeeded in silencing the English battery in two or three rounds. The fleet came under fire from coastal artillery from Fort Island and two forts at the north end of the town of Newport, and anchored between Gold Island and Conanicut without damage.

On 9th August, a fleet of 34 sails appeared off Newport coming from New York and commanded by Admiral Lord Howe. The wind blowing from the south, the French could not leave the port. On August 10, in the morning, the wind turned and blew from the north. At a signal, the French fleet weighed anchor and all the ships hoisted the sail except the frigates which were all in the passage Seconnet. When they arrived at the sea, the wind became weak. The English seemed to have been alarmed by the sight of the French squadron in combat

[42] ●William Laird Clowes, *The Royal Navy*, Vol. III, pp.403ff

position, as they cut their cables, abandoned a large number of landing boats towed to their sterns, and threw many objects overboard in order to lighten their ships. On the morning of August 11th, the French sighted them at a much greater distance. The wind forced, the French continued the chase. The English fleet was then sailing southeast. Seeing that the French were cutting off their way, they changed course. But around 5:00 p.m., the two fleets lined up. The English squadron was then composed of 24 ships and the French one of 12. The French lead ship rushed against the English warship, but the sea was now so heavy that they could not engage properly. The French ships tried to follow them until the wind fell... uselessly.



Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: The hesitations of the Royal Navy in American waters were a bad omen for the continuation of the English campaign on the North American continent.

Sources & Readings ●La Vieille France et la Jeune Amérique, campagne du vice-amiral d'Estaing en 1778. Par G. Lacour-Gayet, Revue des Deux-Mondes, Vol. 25, 1905. ●The Glorious Cause, the American Révolution, 1763-1789, Robert Middlekauff, The Oxford History of the United States, vol. 2, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1982. ●A letter to the Right Hanourable Lord Viscount H-e, [ie. Howe] on his naval conduct in the American War, par Joseph Galloway, J. Wilkie, London, 1779.

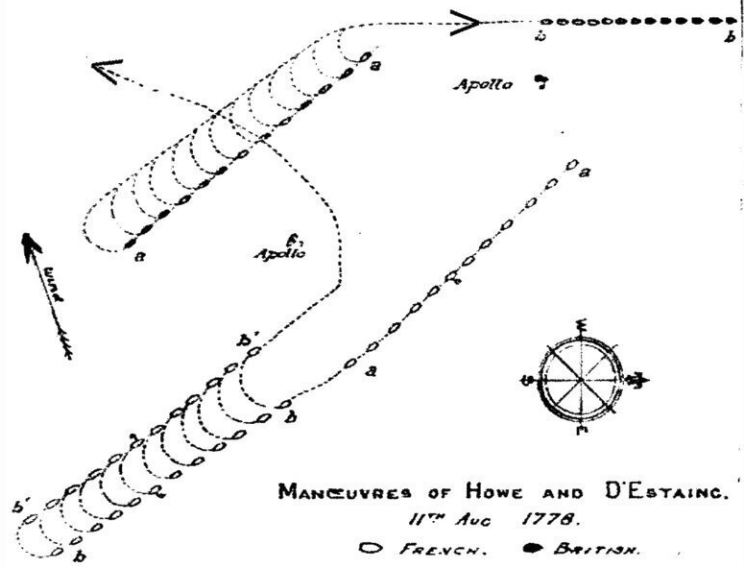
NEWPORT' COMBAT	
MARINE ROYALE	**ROYAL NAVY**
1-Le TONNANT 80 2-Le LANGUEDOC 80, Adm. D'Estaing 3-Le GUERRIER 74, , de Bougainville 4-Le FANTASQUE 64, Le bailli de Suffren 5-Le ZÉLÉ 74, 6-Le VAILLANT 64, 7-Le PROVENCE 64, 8-L'HECTOR 74, 9-Le[43] MARSEILLOIS 74, 10-Le PROTECTEUR 74, 11-Le CÉSAR 74, 12-Le SAGITTAIRE 58 **Frigates**: L'ENGAGEANTE; LA CHIMÈRE; L'AIMABLE; LA FLORE; L'ALCMÈNE	1-EAGLE 64, v/adm Howe 2-TRIDENT 64, comm.Elliot, c. Molloy 3-PRESTON 50, commodore Hotham, 4-CORNWALL 74, Capt. T. Edwards 5-NONSUCH 64, Capt. W Griffith 6-RAISONNABLE 64, Capt. T. Fitzhebert 7-SOMERSET 64, Capt. G. Ourry 8-St.ALBANS 64, Capt. R. Onslow 9-ARDENT 64, Capt. G. Keppel 10-CENTURION 50, Capt. R. Brathwaite 11-EXPERIMENT 50, Capt. J. Wallace 12-ISIS 50, Capt John Rayner 13-RENOWN 50, Capt, G. Dawson 14-PHŒNIX 44, Capt Hyde Parker 15-ROCHUCK 44, Capt. A. Hamond 16-VENUS 36, W. Peere Williams **Frigates** 17-RICHMOND 32, Capt John Gidoin 18-PEARL 32, Capt. John Linzee 19-APOLLO 32, Capt Phil. Pownall 20-SPHINX 20, Capt Alexander Greme 21-NAUTILUS 16, Comm. J. Becher 22-VIGILANT 20, Comm H. Christian 23-TROMBOLO, fs, Comm Peter Aplin 24-SULPHUR fs, Comm James Watt 25-VOLCANO,Commodore W. O'Hara 26-THUNDER 8, bmb, comm. Gambier 27-CARCASS 8, bmb, E. Edwards 28-PHILADELPHIA (galley) Paterson HUSSAR (galley), James Barclay Bart FERRET (galley), Edward O'Bryan CORNWALLIS (galley), Capt. Spry
Source: *Clowes, Vol. III p407*	

●Candid and impartial narrative of the transactions of the Fleet under the Command of Lord Howe, from the arrival of the Toulon Squadron, on the Coast of America, to [...] his Lordship's departure for England, Richard, Earl Richard Howe, London,

[43] Le MARSELLOIS was renamed Le VENGEUR-DU-PEUPLE by the 'pacifists' of the French Révolution.

1779. ●Bougainville à l'Escadre du Comte d'Estaing, Guerre d'Amérique 1778-1779, article par R. de Kerallain, Journal de la Société des Américanistes, année 1927, pp.155-206

Naval Manoevres according to William Clowes, with artillery exchange.



Naval Battle of Pondicherry.

Date of action: August 10th, 1778.

Location: Coromandel Coast, East Indies. City coordinates: 11°56' north latitude and 79° 53' east longitude.

Conflict: American War of Independence [September 5th, 1775 – September 3rd, 1783, Treaties of Paris and Versailles]. War was declared on 6th February 1778 between Louis XVI's France and England.

Background: "Certain intelligence of the war between Great Britain and France reached Calcutta July 7th, 1778. On the same day the Governor-General ordered immediate preparations to attack Pondicherry (principal support of the French) by surprise, before the French learned the news of peace. The Indian Sub-Continent belonged entirely to the British East India Co. at that time. This rogue company was also responsible for the American insurrection by trying to impose its taxed tea on the American Thirteen Colonies. The BEIC will be also responsible for the Opium Wars with China. The BEIC decided to take advantage of the War with France to seize the French trading posts in India. In Paris, the American Benjamin Franklin was working to drag France into the war, knowing that the Thirteen Colonies alone could not defeat the armies and fleets of the British. On February 6th, the aid treaties to the United States were concluded, which led to war between France and England. During the siege of Pondicherry, Bellecombe retained the services of Admiral Tronjoly who was to leave for France. He put at his disposal three merchant ships which he added to Le BRILLANT and La POURVOYEUSE. Tronjoly found himself at the head of a small squadron of 5 ships and 1,300 men.

Military leaders in command ●*French*: Admiral Tronjoly. ●*English*: Commodore Sir Edward Vernon.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: 5 ships and 1,300 crewmen. ●*Royal Navy*: 5 ships and 1,500 crewmen.

ROYAL NAVY	MARINE ROYALE
1-RIPON 60, Comm. Edward Vernon 2-ASIA 54, Capt. George Vandeput 3-COVENTRY 28, Capt John Panton 4-SEAHORSE 21, Alex. M'Coy 5-CORMORANT 18, William Owen	1-Le BRILLANT 60, Captain Tronjoly 2-La POURVOYEUSE 28, (frigate) 3-(indianman) 4-(indianman) 5-(indianman)
5 warships	2 warships and 3 merchantmen

Strategy or tactics: Cannonade in parallel battle lines. The BEIC Army arrived before Pondicherry on the 8th of August, and on the same day Commodore Sir Edward Vernon anchored in the roads *to blockade by sea*. On the 10th an action ensued . "The forces engaged were about equal. A sixty-gun ship and four smaller vessels being on each side. As the French squadron entered Pondicherry after the battle, the immediate advantage may be conceded to them.

Summary of action: On August 1st, Admiral Tronjoly went out with his squadron to fight the English fleet, but the latter, after a few bords, broke off the fight and moved north. The fight took place on two parallel lines and consisted of a long cannonade, with no idea of maneuvering. Both squadrons were of equal strength. A *Te Deum* was sung by the French to celebrate this victory that gave them maritime supremacy in the Bay of Bengal.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: On August 20, the English squadron reappeared before Pondicherry and, on the 21st, Tronjoly offered the fight to the English admiral who refused a second time. The whole city was at the windows. Night fell, and the next day both squadrons were gone. Bellecombe waited for

Tronjoly's return, but the latter, whom Bellecombe forced to remain in India, had simply taken advantage of the night to sail to the island of France, leaving the English squadron in control of the sea.

Sources & Readings ●History of the French in lndia, from the Founding of Pondicherry in 1674, to the Capture of That Place in 1761, George Bruce Malleson, London, 1868. ●Pondicherry, 1674-1761, the failure of an empire dream, Rose Vincent, Ed. Autrement, Paris, 1993. ●Pondicherry, gateway to India, Georgette David, L'Harmattan, Montreal [Quebec], 1999. ●History of Pondicherry, A. Ramasamy, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1987.

Naval battle of Grenada.

Date of the action: 6th July 1779.

Location: Off the island of Granada, West Indies. Mean geographical coordinates: Latitude 12° 07' North, Longitude 6° 40' West.

Conflict: American War of Independence [1775-1783].

Context: The French fleet under Admiral d'Estaing had just convoyed an expeditionary force to the island of Grenada, which had taken the island. But two days later, an English fleet appeared with the intention of rescuing the garrison. Seeing that this island had been retaken by the French, Vice-Admiral Byron wanted, in desperation, to re-retake the island. On 6th January, therefore, Vice-Admiral John Byron arrived with nine ships of the line and joined forces with Rear-Admiral Samuel Barrington off the coast of St. Lucia. The English knew that the island of St. Vincent had been taken by the French and the Caribbean Indians. They had also learned that Admiral d'Estaing had been joined by La Motte-Picquet.

The two concentrated divisions had left Fort Royal of Martinique to take Grenada, forcing the English Governor Lord Macartney to surrender at will and deliver his 100 guns, 24 mortars and ships to the French for 40,000 pounds sterling. Taking back the island of Grenada had thus become Admiral Byron's primary objective and he immediately sailed for that land.

Military leaders in command ●*English*: the Vice-Admiral John Byron[44]. ●*French*: Vice-Admiral d'Estaing; Suffren; de Grasse; Bougainville; Lamotte-Piquet...

[44] ●John Byron [172 3' 17861. English admiral and grandfather of the poet Byron. He explored the South Pacific in 1764 at the head of an expedition, then was appointed Governor of the colony of Newfoundland in 1769.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: 25 smaller vessels, as they totalled only 1468 guns. ●*Royal Navy*: the fleet of Admiral Byron had 21 ships of the line armed with 1516 guns; 11,641 men, including landing infantry[45].

Strategy or tactics: Traditional parallel lines. The coastal batteries assisted the French ships in defeating the three-deck super-ships (98 guns). They fired 20,699 rounds. Why didn't Comte d'Estaing complete the success of his brilliant naval day by seizing four English ships, which, in a sorry state [especially the MONMOUTH], could not easily join their squadron? He did not know how to take advantage of undeniable advantages to paralyze, if not annihilate, the English fleet until the end of the campaign. "Victory cannot be disputed, Suffren said of him. But, had he been as seafaring as he was brave, we would not have let four unmasted ships escape[46]."

Summary of the action: At dawn on 6th July, the French squadron was sighted coming from Baie Saint-Georges, a large bay to the west of Grenada. The personal mark of the English Vice-Admiral was on The PRINCESS- ROYAL, a large vessel of 98 guns, followed by 20 ships. The French flagship was Le LANGUEDOC [80 guns], but in its line, some captains had names that will become famous later: Suffren, De Grasse, Bougainville, La Motte-Picquet. The English admiral had the wind in his favour and thought to surprise the French who were busy maneuvering. But the latter, although not yet in line, were ready to fight. The battle began[47]

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[45] ● This number included, among others, The CONQUEROR [74 guns, Rear Admiral Parker|, The SUFFOLK [74 guns, Rear Admiral Rowley], The GRAFTON [74 canons], The PRINCESS- ROYAL [Admiral Byron's large 98-gun three-deck flagship], accompanied by numerous frigates.

[46] ●After his mistakes in Saint Lucia [see this attack during the second half of December 1778], this fact did nothing to restore his reputation.

[47] ●Other than the general works cited *in fine* and those mentioned in reference at the bottom of the pages, the texts in this chapter are the synthesis of the following works: *Le bailli de Suffren*, Just-Jean-Etienne Roy, Fr, Joubert, Editions Marne et Fils, Tours, 1879. *Vie de Suffren*, Bescherelle-Aîné. Editions Ardant, Limoges. *L'Histoire Maritime de France,* Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843. *Les Batailles navales*

MARINE ROYALE Source: Archives Nat. France; War . B[1] 1 141-277: 1783, carton 50	**ROYAL NAVY** Source: Beatson, vi ---WLC
1●Le ZÉLÉ 74 canons, chef d'esc. Barras. 2●Le FANTASQUE 64, Suffren 3●Le MAGNIFIQUE 74, Brach 4●Le TONNANT 80, chef d'es. Breugnon 5●Le PROTECTEUR 74, Grasse 6●Le FIER 50,Turpin 7●Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL 70, Mithon 8●Le PROVENCE 64, Champorcin 9●Le FENDANT 74, Vaudreuil 10●L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Peunier 11●Le FIER-RODRIGUE 50, Montaut 12●L'HECTOR 74, Moriès 13●Le LANGUEDOC 80. v/ad d'Estaing 14●Le ROBUSTE 74, C/esc de Grasse 15●Le VAILLANT 64, Chabert 16●Le SAGITTAIRE 54, Albert 17●Le GUERRIER 74, Bougainville 18●Le SPHINX 64, Soulange 19●Le DIADÈME 74, Dampierre 20●L'AMPHION 50, Ferronl 21●Le MARSEILLAIS 74, La Poype 22●Le CÉSAR 74, chef d'escadre Broves 23●Le VENGEUR 64, Retz 24●Le RÉFLÉCHI 64, Cillart 25●L'ANNIBAL 74, c/e Motte-Picquet	1●The SUFFOLK 74, R/Ad J. Rowley 2●The BOYNE 70, Herbert Sawyer 3●The ROYAL OAK 74, T. Fitzherbert, 4●The PR. OF WALES 74, C/A. Barrington 5●The MAGNIFICENT 74, J.Elphington 6●The TRIDENT 64, A.J. Pye Molloy 7●The MEDWAY 60, W.Affleck 8●The FAME 74, J. Butchart 9●The NONSUCH 64, W. Griffith 10●The SULTAN 74, A. Gardner 11●The PRINCESS ROYAL 98 v/a Byron 12●The ALBION 74, G. Bowyer 13●The STIRLING CASTLE 64 R.Carkett 14●The ELIZABETH 74, W. Truscott 15●The YARMOUTH 64, N. Bateman 16●The LION 64, W. Cornwallis 17●The VIGILANT 64, D. Dent 18●The CONQUEROR 74, r/a H. Parker 19●The CORNWALL 74, T. Edwards 20●The MONMOUTH 64, R. Fanshawe 21●The GRAFTON 74, T. Collingwood
Numerous frigates including: DILIGENTE, and the schooner BARINGTON, captured British vessel. TOTAL: 25 small battleships with only **1168 guns**	**Numerous frigates including**: The ARIADNE 20, etc... TOTAL: 21 larger battleships with **1516 guns**

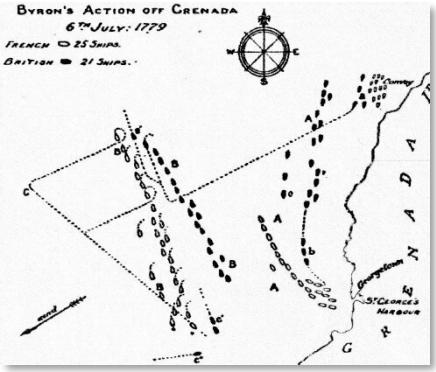
Source: William Laird Clowes

The PRINCESS-ROYAL, huge three-decker ships, with three impressive rows of gun ports on each side, in the centre of the English line, gave the signal for the attack. The cannonade began at 7:30 between Vice-Admiral Barrington [The PRINCE-OF-WALES 74 guns], supported by The BOYNE 70, The SULTAN 74, The GRAFTON 74 [Captain Collingwood], The

de la France, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. William Laird Clowes, *The Royal Navy*, vol. II. London.

CORNWALL 74 [Captain Edwards], The LION 64 [Captain Cornwalis] and The MONMOUTH 64 [Captain Thomas Fanshawe].

The first English ships that attacked were badly mauled by the artillery of the French line and by the shore batteries. The MONMOUTH, The CORNWALL and The LION soon had to leave the battleline and the battlefield. The English line was finally cut off and thrown into disorder.



The LION was so badly damaged that it had to be sunk in St.Lucia. This man-of-war was unsalvageable having lost most of its masts. The GRAFTON and the CORNWALL were also damaged. The MONMOUTH had become totally unfit for battle.

The English admiral could see the French flag on the fort and batteries of Baie-Saint-Georges. But this defeat forbade him to think of dislodging them. That evening, he had his remaining ships lined up, and the Comte d'Estaing did the same. But during the night, Admiral Byron went to anchor under the protection of the guns of St. Kitts [Saint-Christophe]. The French squadron returned to anchor off Grenada, "to the great displeasure of the English spectators in the colony who had counted on d'Estaing's defeat[48]".

Casualties & Losses ●*English*: The CORNWALL, The LION and The MONTMOUTH were badly damaged. The LION was dismasted of her mainmast and fouled parrot. The English had a thousand killed and wounded [1055 in all]. ● The *French*

[48] Specified a columnist.

suffered almost similar casualties [176 killed and 773 wounded], but lost no ships.

Consequence of this English defeat: The purpose of the battle was to retake Grenada from the French. It was a failure for the English. This battle was[49] the most disastrous defeat of the Royal Navy since its defeat at Beachy Head [Béveziers] in 1690. Instead of pursuing and completely destroying the English fleet, Admiral d'Estaing contented himself with letting it take off.

Sources & Readings ●Naval researches ; or, a candid inquiry into the conduct of Admirals Byron, Graves, Hood, and Rodney, in the actions off Grenada, Chesapeak, St. Cbristopher's, and of the nine and twelfth of April, 1782: being a refutation of the plans and statements of Mr. Clerk, Rear Admiral Ekins and others. Illustré, etc, capitaine, R.N. Thomas White, Honorable John Byron, John of Eldin Clerk Devonport Printed, London, 1830. ●Admiral Satan . Life and campaigns of Suffren, Roderick Cayaliero, I.B. Tauris, Londres, 1994. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London. ●L'Amiral d'Estaing (1729-1794), Calmon-Maison, Paris, Calmann Lévy, Paris, 1910. ●Charles-Henri d'Estaing amiral de France et franc-maçon, 1729-1794; suivi de Marine et franc-maçonnerie 1750-1830, Jean-Marc Van Hille, Chevilly-Larue, Challenges d'aujourd'hui, Paris, 1994. ●La Royale au temps de l'amiral d'Estaing, Michel Vergé-Franceschi, La Pensée universelle, Paris, 1977.

[49] According to the American historian and tactician Mahan.

Naval battle of Flamborough Head.

Other name: Battle of Leith.

Date of the action: September 23, 1779.

Location: Flamborough Head is located in the Forth opposite Leith [Scotland]. Geographic coordinates: 54°07' North latitude and 00°04' West longitude.

Conflict: American War of Independence [5th September 1775 – 3rd September 1783, Treaty of Paris and Versailles].

Context: With a squadron of seven ships, John Paul Jones arrived from St. Croix on August 14th, 1779. On the way he was deserted by four of his seven ships. By mid-September, he appeared off Leith, the port of Edinburgh. At 1:00 p.m., Le BONHOMME-RICHARD spotted a convoy of merchants escorted by several English warships.

Military Leaders involved ●*Royal Navy*: Captain Pearson commanded the English squadron. ●*Franco-Americans*: the squadron was commanded by the Scotsman John Paul Jones[50] .

Military Forces involved ●*English*: The SERAPIS [40 guns, Captain William Pearson], The COUNTESS OF SCARBOROUGH [20 guns, Captain Percy] and one other ship. ●*Franco -Americans*: the frigate Le BONHOMME- RICHARD [ex-Le DURAS, 35 guns and 375 men, half of them French], the French frigate Le PALLAS [32 guns, 275 men], the

[50] ●Le Chevalier Jones ", as he liked to be called, was a Scottish corsair born in Kirkcudbright [Scotland]. With The RANGER, granted by the American Congress, he scoured the coast of Scotland in order to capture English ships. Then he obtained from the French Government the command of the man-of-war DURAS which he renamed Le BONHOMME-RICHARD. Thanks to this action and to the American flag, Jones is now considered the founder of the US Navy. A third of the insurgent army was of Irish origin and another third of Scottish origin. Twenty years later, the terrible ethnic cleansing of the Scottish Highlands began [Highlands Clearances] under an economic pretext.

American frigate L'ALLIANCE [35 guns, 300 men partly American, partly French], La VENGEANCE [12 guns, 70 men].

Strategy or tactics: Flamborough Head is a magnificent rocky escarpment that extends over several miles along the Yorkshire coast, sometimes rising vertically to great heights of 45 m, which for England is remarkable.

Summary of the action: As soon as the antagonists saw each other, the escort, commanded by Captain Pearson, placed itself between the convoy and the French and American privateers.

At about 5:30 p.m., as the privateers were still threatening the convoy, Pearson prepared for battle. At 7:20 p.m., as daylight was falling, Le BONHOMME-RICHARD went to the SERAPIS within musket range. Neither of the two had hoisted their flag. Captain Pearson called in French to inquire about the identity of the vessel. "The PRINCESS ROYAL", he was told by Paul Jones in English. Full of suspicion, Pearson asked a few more questions to which Paul Jones answered evasively.

Pearson then fired a cannonball as a warning. Immediately the French ship responded in kind and Paul Jones raised his flag. According to some, it was the American flag that were hoisted on Le BONHOMME-RICHARD[51] and French flags on the other ships. All the crews were ready. The cannonade began as soon as the gun ports were opened. An energetic maneuver by Le BONHOMME RICHARD attempted to board The SERAPIS, but the English pushed the Frenco-American back with its spikes.

Night fell rapidly and the flashes of gunfire[52] streaked the sky from the masts and hulls. The shots were fired at point-blank range, in the darkness, accompanied by screams and the

[51] ●This, one can imagine, must have made all the sailors of Her Gracious Majesty blaspheme, down to the last sailor because the Stars & Stripes was not yet the most popular flag in England. It did not become popular in England until 1917, when the Americans landed in Europe.

[52] ●From individual weapons and cannons.

crashing of bodies falling from the mast, while at times the enormous explosions from the cannons deafened everyone. From the Yorkshire coast, the inhabitants could follow the lightning and the noise of the battle. Exciting fireworks!

As incredible as it may seem, the English SERAPIS caught fire twelve times under the effect of the incendiary bombs which spread on her deck; and it was not without difficulty that her crew extinguished them on this ship whose deck was swept by the projectiles and encumbered with dead and dying. Nearby, the COUNTESS-OF-SCARBOROUG was fighting to the death with the French frigate Le PALLAS and the smaller corvette La VENGEANCE.

At around 9:30 p.m., an artillery gargousse[53] was fired on board the English ship, either by accident or by the action of the French. The explosion immediately communicated fire with the speed of lightning, seriously burning and killing all those, gunners and officers, who were in the vicinity. Consequently, all the guns were rendered useless on the COUNTESS-OF-SCARBOROUGH; and that, for the remainder of the battle.

During all this time, the largest of the French frigate circled endlessly around The SERAPIS, constantly showering its hull with cannon balls and sweeping its deck with a heavy fire. The SERAPIS looked more and more like a morgue. Around 10:00 p.m., it seems that a trap was set for the British sailors, who immediately fell into it. The English heard the corsairs shouting "Quartier![54]". When Pearson asked if they were surrendering, no one answered. An English prize crew came on the French ship, realizing that they were expected by fighters armed

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[53] ●A gargousse; powderbag.

[54] ●That is, "Spare us! Stop slaughtering us!" The etymology of the word "quarter" in the expressions "No quarter", "Do not grant quarter", "Ask for quarter" is obscure [in its precise meaning] In the Middle Ages, the defeated were not slaughtered if they could show their nobility; they preferred to release them for a solid ransom. On the other hand, those who could not show *a quarter of nobility on their shield or blazon*, were poor and could not pay any ransom; so they were killed.

to the teeth. With a shout of rage, the English fled back to their ship.

The SERAPIS and the French frigate resumed firing into the hull and mast of the ships with devastating effects. The main mast of the English suddenly came down with a big bang on the deck. The fight continued for a moment then the English captain ordered his flag to be lowered. He surrendered. The fire ceased immediately. The COUNTESS-OF-SCARBOROUGH had already surrendered to Le PALLAS as well as the third English ship.

Casualties ●*Franco-Americans*: 100 or 150 killed and wounded. ●*English*: about 300 killed and wounded. The SERAPIS alone suffered half the losses of the three English ships.

Consequence of this English defeat: The French took their three captures to Texel. The King of France gave the privateer Paul Jones a golden sword[55]. The Americans consider John Paul Jones as the founder of the US Navy.

Sources & Readings ●John Paul Jones, Memoir of the American Revolution Presented to King Louis XVI of France, translated from the French manuscript by Gérard W. Gawalt, Washington, Library of Congress, 1979. ●John Paul Jones and the Battle off Flamborough Head. A Reconsideration, by Thomas J. Schaeper, New York, P. Lang, 1989. ●History of Paul Jones the Pirate, Friends of Whitehaven Museum, Whitehaven, 1992. ●The Life and Adventures of Rear-Admiral John Paul Jones, John Stevens Cabot Abbott, Dodd & Mead, New York, 1872. ●Paul Jones, Founder of the American Navy. A History, Augustus C. Buell, 2 vols., Kegan Pau] & Co, London and New York, 1900 ●The Sailor Whom England Feared. Being the Story of Paul Jones, Scotch Naval Adventurer and Admiral in the American and Russian Fleets, Mary MacDermot Crawford, published by Eveleigh Nash, London, 1913. ●Le Corsaire chez

[55] ●This privateer died in Paris in 1792 in misery. The US government did not offer him a veteran's pension. It was the French who offered him a pension to keep him from starving.

l'Impératrice, Valentine Thompson, Paris, 1936. ●The Life and Letters of John Paul Jones, by Mrs Reginald de Koven, vol. 2, T. Werner Laurie, Ltd, London [date missing]. ●Night on fire; the first complete account of John Paul Jones's greatest battles, by John Evangelist Walsh, McGraw-Hill, New York, London, 1978. ●The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War, by David Syrett, Columbia [S.C.], University of South Carolina, 1998.

SUMMARY OF THE LOSSES AND CAPTURES DURING THE PERIOD 1775-1783								
	British Vessels				French & American Vessels			
	Merchantmen		Privateers		Marchantmen		Privateers	
	Taken	Re-taken or ransomed	Taken	Re-taken or ransomed	Taken	Re-taken or ransomed	Taken	Re-taken or ransomed
1775	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
1776	229	51	---	---	19	---	6	---
1777	331	52	---	---	51	1	18	---
1778	359	87	5	---	232	5	16	---
1779	487	106	29	5	238	5	31	---
1780	581	260	15	2	203	3	34	1
1781	587	211	38	6	277	10	40	---
1782	415	99	1	---	104	1	68	---
1783	98	13	1	1	11	2	3	---
Source: Lloyd's Insurance Co. published by WLC								

Naval Battle of Fort Royal Bay

Date of action: winter 1779.

Location: Fort-Royal was the pre-revolutionary name of Fort-de-France, capital of Martinique. Mean geographic coordinates of Fort-de-France Bay: 14° 34' north latitude and 61°04' west longitude.

Conflict: American War of Independence [September 5th, 1775-September 3rd, 1783, Treaty of Paris; Treaty of Versailles.]

Background: Just across from Martinique, the island of Saint Lucia was in English hands. Around February, a French supply convoy was reported escorted by the Chevalier de La Flotte with a frigate. Having been falsely informed that Saint Lucia had been retaken by the French, the convoy, sailing for Fort Royal, arrived from the south and entered the canal between Martinique and Saint Lucia.

Military Leaders in command ●*Marine Royale*: Lieutenant-General of the Naval Armies La Motte-Picquet[56].

Military Forces involved ●*English*: 13 ships-of-the-line. ●*French*: Only one French frigate escorted the logistics convoy. La Motte-Picquet, Resident Division at Fort Royal, had only three ships-of-the-line.

Strategy or Tactics: In order to facilitate the passage of a logistical convoy, three French warships, supported by coastal batteries, closed Fort Royal Bay to an English fleet.

Summary of Action: The English squadron of 13 ships-of-the-line, based at Saint Lucia, weighed anchor and set sail to seize the convoy, part of which had already reached Cape Solomon which forms the southern tip of the Baie of Fort Royal, and which was fortified with batteries.

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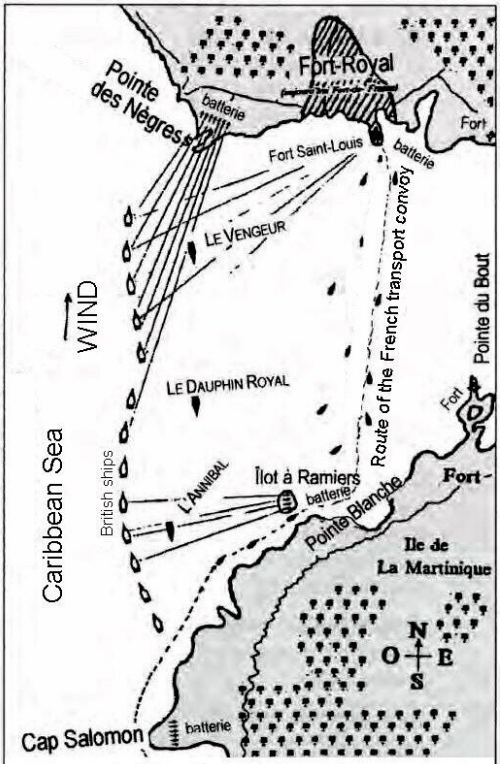
[56]●Guillaume Toussaint, comte de La Motte-Picquet (1720-1791).

At the first signal, the Lieutenant-General of the Naval Armies, La Motte-Picquet, immediately set sail with a single warship, L'ANNIBAL [74 guns], to go to the aid of the convoy and ordered the other two ships[57] to prepare to follow him. His resident squadron, based at Fort Royal, consisted of only these three ships of the line.



Battle of Fort Royal Bay
Winter of 1779

La Motte-Picquet went directly to the English squadron to prevent it from seizing the transports. The batteries of L'ANNIBAL were supported by the coastal batteries that framed the bay, at l'Îlette-à-Ramiers and Pointe-des-Nègres. He sustained for an hour the fire of the thirteen English ships. He was then rallied by Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL and Le VENGEUR who took part in the fight. The convoy was saved. Even the few stranded cargoes of food and ammunition[58] were recovered by longboats after the battle, when the English squadron retreated at night to St. Lucia. In a delightful maneuver where La Motte-Picquet was

[57] ●Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL 70, capitaine Mithon, and Le VENGEUR 64 guns.
[58] ●Several transport ships were ordered to run aground rather than fall into the hands of the English.

forced to turn under enemy fire[59], the Chevalier de Fornoue who commanded Le VENGEUR came to intervene by presenting his batteries to danger and L'ANNIBAL carried out his maneuver without difficulty.

Casualties & Losses ●*English*: the English lost 150 men, killed and wounded, by coastal and naval artillery. ●*French*: Only a few French sailors were killed or wounded.

Consequence of this English defeat: The French convoy arrived safely.

Sources & Readings: ●From Grasse to Yorktown, James Brown Scott, French Institute of Washington, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1931. ●The French Navy and American Independence. A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774-1787, Jonathan R, Dull, Princeton University Press, London, 1975. ●Fort-de-France, military town: 1639-1985, edited by Geneviève Leti, Fort -de-France, Collège de Coridon, 1986. ●Le Mouillage, port de Saint-Pierre de la Martinique: trois siècles d'histoire, Adéline de Reynal, Association des amis du Musée régional d'histoire et d'ethnographie, Saint-Pierre. ●Histoire de la marine française pendant la guerre d'indépendance americaine, preceded by a study of the France Navy and its institutions from the beginning of the XVII century to the year 1877, by E. Chevalier, Hachette. Parts, 1877.

[59] ●Dangerous maneuver, because L'ANNIBAL could be taken by the bow without possibility of riposte on its part.

Naval battle of Dominica.

Date of the action: April 17th, 1780.

Location: Island in the Caribbean Sea. Average geographic co-ordinates of the island: 15° 30' North & 61° 20' West.

Conflict: American War of Independence [5th September 1775 – 3rd September 1783, Treaty of Paris; Treaty of Versailles].

Background: During the night of the 15th, the French squadron of Admiral-Comte de Guichen left Fort-Royal of Martinique. It was, on the morning of the 16th of April, northwest of the island of St. Lucia where they waited for the English. The English squadron approached, put itself in line of battle facing the 21 French ships-of-the-line, 3 frigates and two fireships. On board the French ships, some companies in white uniform of the Champagne Regiment [2nd Regiment of Infanterie de Ligne], of Touraine [98th of Ligne], of Enghien [100th of Ligne], of Viennois and Aasen Viennois and Ausenois. Other troops had embarked on the French transport ships, but other troops had embarked on the French ships, but they were in red uniform, they were the Irish of the 94th Regiment de Dillon's Line Infantry and Comte Walsh's *Irish Brigade*, with the Regiment de La Martinique, the Voluntairess de Bouillé and some companies of Artillery. In order to get *windward*[60] of Dominica, Guichen spent the day trying to get upwind. In spite of this, he did not succeed in taking the wind from the English who maneuvered accordingly.

Evening was approaching and the English line[61] seemed to hesitate. Finally, Rodney preferred to wait until the next day to attack.

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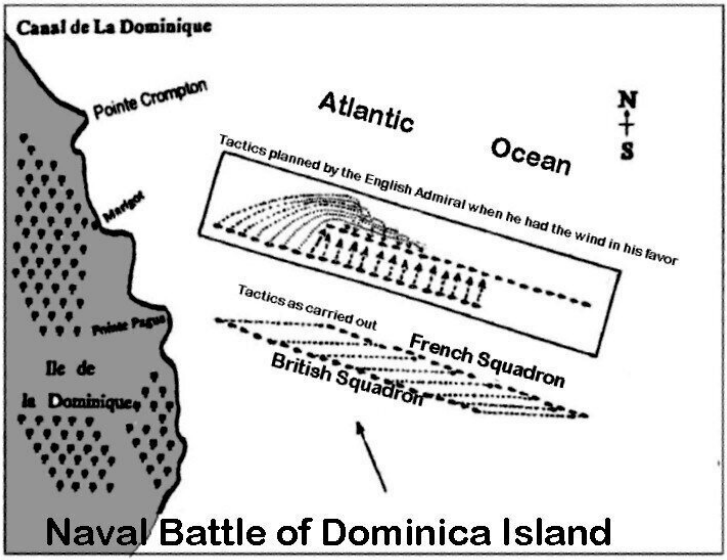
[60] Opposite to leeward. Upwind is opposite to downwind.

[61] ●Who had the wind and who was to decide the moment of the battle, the French not being able, therefore, to approach them.



Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Sir George Bridge, baron Rodney, born in 1717, died in 1792. ●*Marine Royale*: Luc de Bouëxic, Comte de Guichen[62].

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: the 22 French ships had only 50 to 74 guns each. Only one, the flagship Le COURONNE, had 80. *Total 1,410 guns*. ●*English*: the 22 English vessels were all between 74 and 90 guns. Total: 2014.

French	***English***
1- Le DESTIN 74, Capt. Dumaitz	1-PRINCESS-OF-WALES 90, flagship
2-], Le VENGEUR 64, Retz	2-STERLING CASTLE 64, c. Carkett.
3-Le SAINT-MICHEL 60, Aymar	3-AJAX 74, Capt. Uvedale.
4-Le PLUTON 74, La Marthonie	4-ELIZABETH 74, Capt. Maitland.
5-Le TRIOMPHANT 80, c/esc Sade	5-PRINCESS ROYAL 90, R/Ad.Parker
6-Le SOUVERAIN 74, Glandevès	6-ALBION 74, Capt. Bowyer
7-Le SOLITAIRE 64, Ciré - Chainpion	7-TERRIBLE 74, Capt. Douglas.
8-Le CITOYEN 74, Nieul	8-TRIDENT 64, Capt. Molloy.
9-Le CATON 64, Framond	9-GREYHOUND 26, Capt. Dickson.

[62] ●Lieutenant-General, born in Fougères in 1712, died in 1790.

10-Le VICTOIRE 74, A. St-Hippolyte 11-Le FENDANT 74, c/esc Vaudreuil 12-La COURONNE 80, adm. Guichen 13-Le PALMIER 74, c/esc Monteil 14-L'INDIEN 64, Balleroy 15-L'ACTIONNAIRE 64, L'Archantel **16**-L'INTRÉPIDE 74, Duplessis-Parsc. 17-Le TRITON 64, Brun 18-Le MAGNIFIQUE 74, Brach 19-Le ROBUSTE 74, c/esc de Grasse 20-Le SPHINX 64, Soulange 21-Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL 70, Mithon 22-L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Peynier 23-L'HERCULE 74, Amblimont **Frigates**: IPHIGÉNIE, COURAGEUSE, MÉDÉE, RÉSOLUE, GENTILLE. **Corvettes**: CÉRÈS, CHASSEUR, LIVELY, SANS-PAREIL, EAGLE [capt], carried siege and field artillery train. Le SAINT-LOUIS transport of gunners.	10-GRAFTON 74, T Collingwood. 11-YARMOUTH 64, Capt. Bateman. 12-CORNWALL 74, Capt. Edwards. 13-SANDWICH 90, Adm Rodney, 14-SUFFOLK 74, Capt. Christian. 15-The BOYNE (70) Capt. Cotton. 16-The VIGILANT (64) Capt. Home. The VENUS 36, Capt. Ferguson. The PEGASUS (28-frigate) Capt. Bazely. The DEAL CASTLE (20-fregate) Capt. Fooks. **REAR**: The VENGEANCE 74 Com. Hotham. 17-The MEDWAY (60) Capt. Affleck. 18-The MONTAGU (74) Capt. Houlton. 19-The CONQUEROR (74) R/A Rowley. 20-The INTREPID (64) Capt. St.John. 21-The MAGNIFICENT 74 Capt. Elphinstone. 22-The CENTURION (50) Capt. Braithwaite. 23-The ANDROMEDA 28 (frigate) Capt. Byme.
	In total, 2,014 guns, that is to say *604 guns more than the French* (!).

Strategy or tactics: Rodney, who had the wind in his favor, had planned to *attack half of the French line with the totality of his forces*, which would have given him the double superiority, since he already had 2,014 guns against 1,410 French guns[63]. This plan of action bore all the genius of Nelson at Aboukir[64] and at Trafalgar. Then, after the destruction of the French Rear Guard, Rodney would have attacked and destroyed the rest of the French squadron. The French, who did not have the wind, could not seize the initiative of the maneuver. But a mistake *in signaling* made this magnificent plan fail.

Ironically, it was the French who succeeded in having several naval units attack each of the enormous three-decker

[63] ●"If I concentrate while [the enemy] is dispersed, I can use all my forces to attack a fraction of his" [Art of War, Principle 13, Chapter VI: "Weak Points and strong Points ", *see in fine*].

[64] ●If, at least, at Aboukir, the idea was really Nelson's and not that of one of his officers. In his work, the military theoretician Mahan reports on this controversy among English historians, [see Battle of the Nile, 1798].

English ships. It was at this time that the new cannons called "carronade" were used in the naval and land batteries[65].

Summary of the action: The next day, April 17th, the two squadrons sailed in parallel. At dawn, the English could have attacked, because the wind not having changed and the French remaining in the line of battle, the English kept the advantage. But it was not so; the English did not open the battle immediately. Rodney waited until the sun was almost at its zenith to open the battle. He seemed to hesitate greatly (perhaps out of nervousness). The English, always to windward, were the only ones who could get away from the French line. At noon, Rodney finally gave the battle signal. He ordered to assault the corresponding ship in the French line. The plan was a brilliant one. Rodney intended to concentrate all his forces on the second half of the French squadron, to which the other half could only help with difficulty because of the direction of the wind. *But the French line was out of alignment and the order did not specify whether it was necessary to attack the enemy located at its height or in the numerical order of the battle line*. Rodney wanted everyone to attack at his level. But he saw The STIRLING-CASTLE, the English lead ship, leave L'INDIEN [9th French ship in the line but at his level, and attacked L'HERCULE [first in the French line]. Seeing that everyone else was imitating the STIRLING-CASTLE, Rodney abandoned his original plan and did the same. At ten minutes to noon, therefore, the English line let itself be carried on the French line, ship against ship. Soon, an immense hurricane of noise arose. It was the thousands of cannons which thundered furiously all along the double row of ships. The SANDWICH [90 guns] of Admiral Rodney began to fire on La COURONNE [80 guns], which bore

[65] ●They were melted down at the Scottish town of Loch Carron [so we can write carronade or carronade), at the the foot of the mount Ben Attow (which culminates at 1,015 m) in the Highlands, by the Carron Ironworks Co. They were short cannons, which were later replaced by rifled cannons. Shorter, lighter than the others, they had a powder chamber similar to that of mortars.

the mark of Guichen. Next to it sailed Le TRIOMPHANT, followed by Le FENDANT [74 guns, captain de Vaudreuil].

The gun bombardment lasted more than four hours: from 12:45 p.m. to 17:00 p.m. In the sector of *chef d'escadre* Grasse, it was extremely violent. The English AJAX 74, badly damaged, had to be pull back out of its bad position. In the center, the Rodney's flagship, The SANDWICH [3-decks; 90 guns], caught between the French flagship La COURONNE 70, Le FENDANT 74 and Le TRIOMPHANT 80, was almost entirely dismasted. It received 80 cannonballs, three of which were below the waterline. Rodney had to hoist his mark on another flagship. The INTREPID 64 was sending distress signals. At the station, Le SAINT-MICHEL 60 was very badly treated.

On the 18th, at dusk, the French could no longer see the English fleet which had discreetly retreated during the night. They were not seen until the 19th, when on leeward.

Casualties & Losses: About 8,000 killed and wounded on both sides.

Consequence of this English defeat: The two admirals officially claimed victory, but Rodney admitted in a letter that the French admiral had been well supported but that "the British flag was not properly supported". Indeed, although the two squadrons were numerically equal, the French squadron had 604 fewer guns than the English fleet.

Sources & Readings ●Private Sea Journals, 1778-1782, kept by Admiral Sir Thomas Pasley, Bart., when in command of HMS GLASGOW, AYBIL, and JUPITER... published by Rodney M. S. Pasley, J. M. Dent & Sons, London & Toronto, 1931. ●The Life and Correspondence of the Late Admiral Lord Rodney, Godfrey Basil Mundy, 2 vol., London, 1830. ● Naval researshes; or, a candid inquiry into the conduct of Admirals Byron, Graves, Hood, and Rodney, in the actions off Grenada, Chesapeake, St. Christopher's, and of the ninth and twelfth of April, 1782: being a refutation of the plans and statements of Mr. Clerk, Rear Admiral Ekins and others. Illustrated etc.,

Captain of the Royal Navy Thomas White, Devonport Printed, London, 1830. ●News from Admiral Rodney. Extract of Letter from Admiral Rodney to Mr. Stephens dated in Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes, May 31st, 1780, George Brydges Rodney, 1st Baron, London, 1780.

Naval Battle of St. Lucia.

Date of action: May 15th, 17th and 19th, 1780.

Location: The battle took place in the channel of Saint Lucia, which separates this island of the West Indies from Martinique.

Conflict: American War of Independence, 1775-1783.

Background: After the naval battle of Dominica, the two enemy fleets continued to maneuver in the area by keeping a close eye on each other. Admiral Rodney tried to avoid confrontation, but remained on alert to prevent the French from seizing other English colonies. On May 9th, the French threatened St.Lucia. Bouillé with 600 men were on board the frigate which was to deposit them ashore when the presence of the English fleet in the channel separating the two islands of Saint Lucia and Martinique was reported. "*I was squinting in front of them, Guichen wrote, in order to urge them to leave the canal to do battle*. " But it was useless. The squadrons remained in presence until the 14th, each trying its best to seize the advantage of position and wind.

Military leaders in command ●*Marine Royale*: admiral Guichen. ●*Royal Navy*: admiral Rodney.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: the 23 French ships had only 50 or 74 guns each. Only one, the flagship, La COURONNE, had 80. **A total of 1410 guns**. ●*Royal Navy*: 23 men-of-war; total 2,014 guns.

Strategy or tactics: Simple cannonade in parallel lines.

Summary of the action; Each admiral spied on the mistakes that his skilful opponent might commit, and tried to grasp the superiority of the wind in order to be able to fall on a weakened enemy. Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL having arrived, the French squadron consisted of 23 vessels. By dint of scholarly developments which alternately demonstrated their mutual advantages,

the two fleets finally found themselves, on 15th May, at gun-point.

Marine Royale	Royal Navy
VAN 1-Le DESTIN 74 Capt Dumaitz 2-Le VENGEUR 64 CaptainRetz 3-Le SAINT-MICHEL 60 Captain Aymar 4-Le PLUTON 74 La Marchonie 5-Le TRIOMPHANT 80 c/esc de Sade 6-Le SOUVERAIN 74 Glandevès 7-Le SOLITAIRE 64 Ciré de Champion 8-Le CITOYEN 74 Nieul **CENTRE** 9-Le CATON 64 Framond 10-Le VICTOIRE 74 Albert St-Hippolyte 11-Le FENDANT 74 c/esc Vaudreuil 12-La COURONNE 80 adm de Guichen 13-Le PALMIER 74 c/esc Monteil 14-L'INDIEN 64 Balleroy 15-L'ACTIONNAIRE 64 L'Archantel **REAR** 16-L'INTRÉPIDE 74 Duplessis-Pascau 17-Le TRITON 64 Capitaine Brun 18-Le MAGNIFIQUE 74 Brach 19-Le ROBUSTE 74 c/esc de Grasse 20-Le SPHINX 64 Soulange 21-Le DAUPHIN-ROYAL 70 Mithon 22-L'ARTÉSIEN 64 Peynier 23-L'HERCULE 74 Amblimont Frégates etc : IPHIGÉNIE, COURAGEUSE, MÉDÉE, RÉSOLUE, GENTILLE, corvettes : CÉRÈS, CHASSEUR, LIVELY, SANS-PAREIL, EAGLE carried siege and field artillery train, SAINT-LOUIS transport of gunners.	1-PRINCESS-OF-WALES 90, flagship 2-STERLING CASTLE 64, c. Carkett. 3-AJAX 74, Capt. Uvedale. 4-ELIZABETH 74, Capt. Maitland. 5-PRINCESS ROYAL 90, R/Ad.Parker 6-ALBION 74, Capt. Bowyer 7-TERRIBLE 74, Capt. Douglas. 8-TRIDENT 64, Capt. Molloy. 9-GREYHOUND 26, Capt. Dickson. 10-GRAFTON 74, T Collingwood. 11-YARMOUTH 64, Capt. Bateman. 12-CORNWALL 74, Capt. Edwards. 13-SANDWICH 90, Adm Rodney, 14-SUFFOLK 74, Capt. Christian. 15-The BOYNE (70) Capt. Cotton. 16-The VIGILANT (64) Capt. Home. The VENUS (36) Capt. Ferguson. The PEGASUS (28-frigate) Capt. Bazely. The DEAL CASTLE (20-fregate) Capt. Fooks. **REAR**: 17-The VENGEANCE (74) Commodore Hotham. Capt. Holloway. 18-The MEDWAY (60) Capt. Affleck. 19-The MONTAGU (74) Capt. Houlton. 20-The CONQUEROR (74) Rear-Admiral Josua Rowley; Capt. Watson. 21-The INTREPID (64) Capt. St.John. 22-The MAGNIFICENT (74) Capt. Elphinstone. 23-The CENTURION (50) Capt. Braithwaite. The ANDROMEDA (frigate-28) Capt. Byme. *In total, 2,014 guns,* that is to say *604 guns more than the French* (!).

Bottom of combat on both sides. The wind favoured the English at first, but just as Rodney was about to take advantage of this fortunate circumstance and cut the French line with seven vanguard vessels, the capricious breeze suddenly changed sides. Guichen, without wasting any time, veered off course and successively formed his units in battle. At 19:00, the combat finally engaged. Le COURONNE 80 and Le

PALMIER 74 [his forward sailor] opened fire, which spread like wildfire all the way. Because of the darkness, enemy ships could only be seen by the light of their cannons. The cannonade lasted 35 minutes and then subsided. For three long days, the squadrons remained face to face, maneuvering to take or regain the wind as soon as they had lost it. The English systematically refused any direct contact (by boarding).

On May 19, the French noticed an unusual movement among the English. The larger ships were moving to the vanguard and sailing boats suggested (back and forth) that the crews of the frigates were reinforcing those of the ships. The fight seemed imminent. The battle lines were on opposite sides. In the French line, De Grasse was in the lead, Guichen managed to place himself well. The wind was so weak (a breath of agonizing!) that the ships barely governed. At 15:00 p.m., the lines burst into flames. Two hours later, Guichen signaled to the French line to guard well and to his vanguard [blue squadron] to come to support the rearguard in order to prevent the English from catching the wind by passing the French line and in turn. Their maneuver completed, the English ceased the fight and occupied themselves only with *arriving* and putting their line back in order *under the wind*. Night had fallen and the fighting ceased completely. The two lines, now running on the same edge, remained in parallel. During the night, the English line made carry fuller ; to get a little away from the French.

On the 20th, the English squadron stalled [moved away from the battlefield] without being pursued. She went to Barbados. The French left two days later for Fort-Royal de la Martinique.

Casualties & Losses ●*Royal Navy*: two ships lost and two others badly damaged. Unknown casualties. ●*Marine Royale*: 159 killed and 816 wounded. During the battle of the 17th, the ships that had the most casualties were Le DESTIN [65 killed or wounded], Le PLUTON [39], L'INTRÉPIDE [61]. On the 15th, the SPHINX had been the most tested of the French ships with 28 victims; 12 ships had had no losses.

Consequence of this English defeat: Thus, the control of the sea escaped the Royal Navy and the Marine Royale was able to transport the French Expeditionary Forces to America. When this French Expeditionary Force of America set sail at Brest on May 2nd, 1780, under the command of Lieutenant-General Comte de Rochambeau the fleet that carried it consisted of 48 ships including 7 warships: Le DUC-DE-BOURGOGNE, Le CONQUÉRANT, Le PROVENCE, Le NEPTUNE, L'É-VEILLÉ, Le JASON, L'ARDENT and the hospital ship Le FANTASQUE; 5 frigates: The BELLONE, The OVERSEER, THE AMAZON, THE WASP, THE SNAKE; and 36 transports. Due to a lack of means of transport,

Sources & Readings ●Letter or instructions from the colonial general assembly of the Île Saint-Lucie-la-Fidèle to J.-B. Thounens, his extraordinary deputy to the National Convention, followed by some other pictures on the same subject (18th February-17th May1793), Publication in Paris, Impr. De Testut, (no date). ●Report to the Committees of Marine and the Consolidated Committees and to the public, by J.-B. Thunens, Impr. de Limbourg, Paris, (no date). ●Sainte-Lucie, fille de la Martinique, Eugène et Raymond Latouche, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, R. Bruneau-Latouche, 1989. ●Contribution à l'étude de l'histoire de l'île de Sainte-Lucie, essai de bibliographie critique et d'inventaire des sources, Xavier Steiner, Publication Paris, Centre de généalogie et d'histoire des Isles d'Amérique, 1999. ●The Life and Correspondence of the late Admiral Lord Rodney, Godfrey Basil Mundy, 2 vols., London, 1830. ●Letter-Books and Order Book of George, Lord Rodney, Admiral of the White Squadron, 1780-1782, by Dorothy C. Barck, 2 vols., New York, 1932. ●News from Admiral Rodney, Extract of Letter from Admiral Rodney to Mr. Stephens dated in Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes, May 31, 1780, George Brydges Rodney, 1st Baron, London, 1780.

Battle of the Chesapeake Bay.

Date of action: March 16th, 1781.

Location: Mouth of the Chesapeake River, Atlantic coast of the United States of America. Approximate geographical coordinates of the battle area: 37° 16' north latitude; Longitude 75° 75' W.

Conflict: American Revolutionary War, 1775-1782.

Background: War was raging in the Thirteen American Colonies in revolt against England. At the request of the Americans, who refused to pay the additional taxes [tea...] which London wanted to impose on them in order to fill the coffers of the State emptied by the Seven Years War, the France had declared war on England. For the first time in its history England had to face France alone without the support of foreign powers. *Thus, after using England and its coalition to get rid of the French in North America, the Americans would use France to get rid of England*[66]. Which, it must be recognized, was a masterstroke for a nation as weak as the United States of the late eighteenth century.

The squadrons of the warring nations patrolled the Atlantic coast. On 16th March two small squadrons of eight vessels each met at the mouth of the Chesapeake Baie, at the very place where, on 5 September of that year, the great battle that ended the war was about to take place.

Military Leaders in command. ●*French*: Chevalier Destouches. ●*English*: Admiral Arbuthnot

[66] « [...as his countrymen [those of George Washington, i.e. the Americans] had left the expulsion of the French mainly to England, so they now purposed to leave the expulsion of the English to France, while they busied themselves in making money», wrote with bitterness the great English military writer Fortescue [History of the Army, *see in fine*].

COMBAT OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY, March 16th 1781					
MARINE ROYALE			ROYAL NAVY		
SHIPS	G	Capt.	SHIPS	G	Capt.
Le NEPTUNE	74	Destouches	AMERICA	64	Thompson
D-DE BOURGOGNE	84	Durfort	BEDFORD	74	Affleck
Le CONQUÉRANT	74	La Grandière	ADAMANT	50	Johnstone
Le PROVENCE	64	Lambart	LONDON	98	T & D Graves
L'ARDENT	64	Marigny	ROYAL OAK	74	Arbuthnot
LE JASON	64	La Clochèterie	PRUDENT	64	Burnett
L'ÉVEILLÉ	64	Tilly	EUROPE	64	Child
Le ROMULUS	44	Villebrune	ROBUST	74	Cosby
L'HERMIONE fri	36	La Touche	GUADALUPE fri	28	Robinson
La GENTILLE frig.	32		PEARL frigate	32	Montagu
La FANTASQUE	64	Vaudoré	IRIS frigate	32	Dawson
			MEDEA frigate	28	
TOTAL 8 **warships** and 3 frigates, **664 guns**			8 waships **and 4 frigates**, **682 guns**		

Military Forces involved: *Marine Royale*: Chevalier Destouches had eight ships-of-the-line, including Le ROMULUS, Le CONQUÉRANT, Le JASON, L'ARDENT and L'ÉVEILLÉ. ●*Royal Navy*: the English admiral Arbutnot also had eight ships of the line, including The LONDON, huge three-deck.

Strategy or tactics: Cannonade in parallel lines. Extremely dense musketry fire.

Summary of the action: On either side, the four leading ships engaged in a dense fire. The action quickly became very bruised. Le CONQUÉRANT 74, commanded by La Grandière, Le JASON 64 [Marigny] and L'ARDENT 64 [La Clochèterie] distinguished themselves particularly for their fighting spirit. L'ÉVEILÉ 64 fought hard The LONDON 98 and stuffed her hull with 300 cannonballs. He himself received only about fifty.

The Infantry troops swept the English bridges with musketry dumps. Chevalier Destouches even managed to seize a large frigate and turned it against the British with a capture crew. During this deadly battle, three English ships were forced to leave the line, badly damaged. Two French ships were no less so. And, as Chevalier Destouches prepared to turn around to relaunch the raging fight, the English fleet stalled and disappeared into the Chesapeake Bay, leaving the battlefield to Destouches.

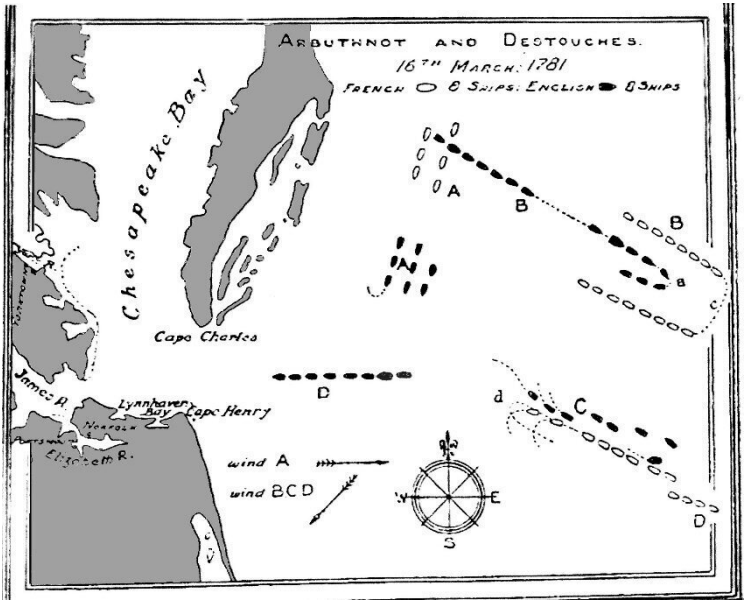
Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Royale*: 72 killed and 112 wounded, two ships damaged. ●*Royal Navy*: about 250 wounded (killed?), 3 ships damaged and one captured by the French.

As a result of this English defeat, Destouches returned to Rhode Island towing Le CONQUÉRANT which had lost its rudder. He was appointed Chef d'Escadre [Squadron Commander] for his feat of arms.

***Description of the same battle by the British Historian William Laird Clowes*:** Vol 3 p.490-491 "As fighting was inevitable, des Touches decided also to utilise the manoevre by surrendering the weather gage. And passing to leeward. The advantage of this course was that, with the existing sea and wind, and the inclination of the ships, the party that had the opponent on his weather side could open the lower deck ports and use those guns. There was thus a great increase of battery power, for the lower guns were the heaviest... At 2pm Arbuthnot made the signal to wear... The ships in the van and centre were all engaged by 2.30, so Arbuthnot states; but the brunt of the action had already fallen upon the three leading vessels, which got the first raking fire, and, as is also usual, came to closer action than those which followed them (C). They therefore not only lost most heavily in men, but also were so damaged aloft as to be crippled.

The British Vice-Admiral, keeping the signal for the line flying, and not hoisting that for close action, appears to have caused a movement of indecision in the squadron —an evidence again of the hold which the line then still had upon men's minds. Of this Des Touches cleverly availed himself, by ordering his

ship to wear in succession. The French column filed by the three disabled British vessels (d), gave them their broadsides one by one, and then hauled off to the eastward, quitting the field (D). Arbuthnot made signal to wear in pursuit, but the ROBUST 74



and PRUDENT 64, two of the van ships, were now wholly unmanageable from the concentration of fire upon them caused by Destouches's last movement; and the main topsail yard of the LONDON 98, the only British three-decker, has been shot away. The [project of] chase therefore was abandoned, and the squadron put into Chesapeake Bay, for which the wind was fair (D). The French returned to Newport. The respective losses in men were: British, 30 killed, 73 wounded; French 72 killed, 112 wounded. Both sides had eight ships, besides smaller crafts, in this encounter... It is evident that the advantage in force was distinctly with the British [20 more cannons]. For this reason, probably, the action was considered particularly *discreditable* by contemporaries, and the more so because several vessels did not engage closely, – a fault laid to the Vice-Admiral's failure to make the signal for close action, hauling down that for the

line. This criticism is interesting, for it indicates how men's minds were changing; and it shows also that Arbuthnot had not changed, but still lived in the middle of the century. The French Commodore displayed very considerable tactical skill; his squadron was handled neatly, quickly, and with precision. With inferior forces he carried off a decided advantage by sheer intelligence and good management. Unluckily, he failed in resolution to pursue his advantage. Had he persisted, he doubtless could have controlled the Chesapeake."

Sources & Readings: ●The Siege of Charleston, by the British Fleet and Army, under the command of Admiral Arbuthnot and Sir H. Clinton, which terminated with the surrender of that place on the 12th, of May, 1780, par Franklin B. Hough, Munsell, Albany [N.Y.l, 1867. ●French Aid to the American Revolution, Samuel F. Scott, William L. Clements Library, 1976. ●Redcoats and Rebel. Tbe War for America, 1770-1 781, Christopher Hibben, Grafton, Londres, 1990. ● The French Navy and American Independence. A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774-1787, Jonathan R. Dull, Princeton University Press, Londres, 1975. ●The French Forces in America, 1780-1783, Lee Kennett, Westport, Connecticut & Greenwood Press, London, 1977. ●The British Navy and the American Revolution, John A, Tilley, Columbia, S.C., University of South Carolina Press, 1987. ●The Royal Navy, A History From the Earliest Times to the Present, by William Laird Clowes, 7 Vol. Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1899. Vol.3, pp.490ff

Naval Battle of Porto Praya.

Date of action: April 16th, 1781.

Location: In the bay of La Praia, in the island Santiago, one of the islands of Cabo Verde. Average geographical coordinates of the archipelago: 14° 0091' north latitude and 23° 50' west longitude.

Conflict: War of the Independence of the United States of America, 1775-1783, or War of the American Revolution.

Background: Suffren had been ordered to transfer French troops to the Cape of Good Hope to put that sector in a state of defense against Admiral Johnstone who was going to attack it[67]. La Praya [beach] was protected by a Portuguese fort. Portugal was neutral with regard to this conflict. The French squadron headed for the Cape of Good Hope, but on the 11th, L'ARTÉSIEN had a waterway and lacked fresh water. Suffren immediately gave the order to head for the bay of La Praya [or Praia]. On April 16th, at 8:45, L'ARTÉSIEN 64 [in the lead] reported a fleet anchored in the bay.

Military leaders in command ●*Marine Royale*: Le Bailli de Suffren. ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral Johnstone.

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: several warships escorting a powerful fleet of troop-carriers that participated in the battle. ●*Marine Royale*: three troop transports and five warships including a corvette. Le HÉROS [flagship, 74 guns], L'ANNIBAL [74 guns], L'ARTÉSIEN [64 guns], Le SPHYNX [64 guns], Le VENGEUR [64 guns] and The FORTUNE[68].

Strategy or tactics: Surprise attack by the French. The French Navy escort rushed into a narrow passage lined with Royal

[67] ●Capetown was a Dutch colony and England would take advantage of the Dutch alliance with France to take over the colony.
[68] ●A corvette of 16 guns.

Navy vessels, which could have proved a death trap for a less determined and wise leader than Suffren.

BATTLE OF PORTO PRAYA on April 16th, 1781	
BRITISH	**FRENCH**
1-ROMNEY 50, **Commod. Johnstone**	1-Le HÉROS 74, Le Bailli de Suffren
2-HERO 74, Capt. James Hawker	2-L'ANNIBAL 74, de Trémigon
3-MONMOUTH 64, Capt. James Alms	3-L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Capt de Cardeillac
4-JUPITER 50, Capt Tholas Pasley	4-Le SPHINX 64, du Chilleau
5-ISIS 50, Capt. Evelyn Sutton	5-Le VENGEUR 64, de Forbin
6-DIANA 32, Capt. William Burnaby	6-La FORTUNE 16, Corvette.
7-JASON 32, Capt. James Pigott	
8-ACTIVE 32, Capt. Thom Mackenzie	+3 troop-transports
9-RATTLESNAKE 14, Peter Clements	
10-PORTO 16, Capt Thomas Lumley	
11- INFERNAL 8, fs, Henry Darby	
12-TERROR 8, bomb, Charles Wood	
13-TAPAGEUR 14, cutter, d'Auvergne	
14-SAN CARLOS 20, John Boyle	
15-PONDICHERRY 20, Thomas Grove	
16-ROYAL CHARLOTTE 20, Bennett	
17- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
18- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
19- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
20- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
21- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
22- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
23- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
24- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
25- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
26- BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
27-BEIC East-Indiaman 26 guns,	
	Source William Laird Clowes Vol.III

Porto Praya was not a port in the middle of a city as today, but an anchorage, a bay bordered by beaches, and commanded by a Portuguese fort. The English had left a kind of passage between their two groups of ships: a cul-de-sac passage about 100 m wide. The English ships formed a vast crescent along the shore from north to south. On each side of this passage, English vessels, at anchor, presented only their front or rear; therefore, with no threatening artillery.

If they had been embossed[69], they could have presented their flanks armed with cannons, but being only anchored, the north wind had made them rotate, and there was a barely armed end in the direction of this corridor. Suffren who entered this west-facing corridor could cannon at leisure and take the English in a row, by bow to port and stern to starboard, and the English could hardly retaliate, except by musketry. All this was completed by numerous collisions. Strategically speaking, the French admiral and theorist Castex described this era as follows: "[,..] The continental coasts of France and Spain have been enjoying a total peacefulness during the whole American Revolution. Never have our naval forces, at the same time, been concerned with ensuring that they have (as in the past), direct protection. Even better, French squadrons spent long periods on the coast of Spain, even in the Mediterranean Sea, without our coast of the English Channel and the Ocean being attacked, not even in the form of bombing as in the time of the League of Augsburg. The threat of our high-sea naval forces, both in Europe and elsewhere, directed both against communications and against enemy territory, had indirectly protected French coastlines. This French threat demanded from our enemies a vigilance that left them neither means nor freedom of mind to consider something else[70].»

Summary of action: At 9:00, Suffren ordered to get ready for battle. His HÉROS 74 entered the bay and found himself in front of the English squadron who had also come to refuel and regroup. The English had been there for five days. The French hoisted their flame of war and opened fire. The ISIS 50 (English) received a full broadside at 40 m, ravaging it from the bow to the stern forecastle.. Le HÉROS of Suffren was followed remotely by L'ANNIBAL 74. Le VENGEUR 64 was still far away and L'ARTÉSIEN 64 even more, because he had let

[69] ●Anchored to the two end, prow and stern.
[70] ●*"Strategic theories"*, Admiral Raoul Castex. p. 169.

himself be left behind. Le SPHINX 64, much late, abandoned the tow[71] of a large cargo ship to hasten the pace.

Suffren therefore entered the passage, the cul-de-sac described above, and began to throw out a general panic. He thundered on both sides,

From starboard, Suffren attacked the MONMOUTH whose crown he blew up[72]. He was looking for the English flagship. L'ANNIBAL also penetrated after Suffren. Le HÉROS finally slammed and dropped anchor. He had not yet been answered with cannons because of panic. On the other hand, the land troops, very numerous on the English ships, had begun to strafe the French sailors. The English admiral Johnstone did not return to his ship. He climbed the first to come to lead the battle.

L'ANNIBAL [CaptainTrémigon], which followed Le HÉROS de Suffren, entered starboard, in the wind of the HÉROS, between it and The MONMOUTH, in the space of 30 m which separated Le HÉROS from the English ship. The maneuver was so impressive that the English muskets suddenly stopped and the cheers were raised, among the French as well as the English, when L'ANNIBAL came out of the parade. Less than a meter remained of each side. Le HÉROS, who had just anchored, fell into the wind like the English ships and began to present them with the side. L'ANNIBAL imitated him, dropped anchor just in front of Suffren, so close that the latter was obliged to spin cable so as not to receive on his shoulder the stern of L'ANNIBAL when it pivoted on its area. And the killing began. The bay of La Praya quickly became an awful butchery that grew further with the arrival of other French ships. The musketry continued, but was covered by cannonade. The commandments were not gestures.

The battle had begun at 11:00. Overwhelmed by projectiles from ten English ships[73], Suffren fired at break. The

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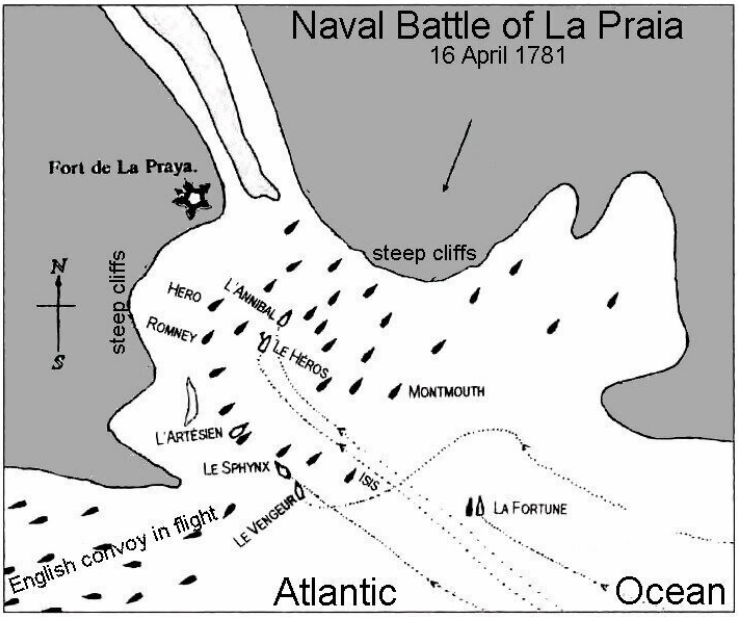
[71] ●The trailering.
[72] ●The crown of a ship, the part of the ship that is above the stern.
[73] ●For the troop transports were of course armed and participated in the battle, with the cannon and individual firearms.

VENGEUR had put himself in third position. He anchored on the starboard side of the fighters because there was no more room near them since Le HÉROS and L'ANNIBAL had filled the bottom of the marine cul-de-sac. Forbin, of Le VENGEUR, therefore tried to catch the English between two fires located between his ship and the other two French ships at the bottom of the cul-d e-sac; at good times so as not to hinder their fire or his. Arrived at the chosen point, he ordered to anchor, but in the infernal noise and the thick suffocating smoke, he was not heard drifting south of the bay where he remained a little out of the fight, but was usefully busy bombarding the English transports fleeing south. L'ARTÉSIEN in turn entered the cul-de-sac, brushed the rear of Le HÉROS, dropped its border on The ISIS and passed it. Captain de Cardaillac [L'ARTÉSIEN] saw an English ship cannoning Suffren and hooked the beaupré[74] on his way by, but at this moment Cardaillac was killed.

His second-in-command, La Boissière, took command. The beaupré of the FORTITUDE broke, freeing L'ARTÉSIEN who drifted. Eight French sailors had already jumped aboard the FORTITUDE. They were delivered much later, in India, when the FORTITUDE was captured by La FINE. La Boissière, the new commander of L'ARTÉSIEN, threw himself on an English ship under sail, seized it on boarding, and then dragged it out to sea. Le SPHINX, delayed by its trailer [L'ESPÉRANCE], arrived almost at the end of the action and as the wind had changed, could not pass to the wind of the English. However, one of its edges carried away the tail of the flag of the last English warship the FORTUNE [Captain Lusignan] approached The INFERNAL, the last Englishman in the East, seized it, but had to abandon it afterwards and on orders.

[74] ●That of the English FORTITUDE.

Le HÉROS and L'ANNIBAL therefore fought alone against five warships and three frigates, not to mention forty more weakly armed carriers but dangerously packing[75]".



The French also had to deal with the Portuguese fort which began to bombard them, because they had violated the neutral territory of Portugal. L'ANNIBAL, whose stern had caught fire, returned fire from both sides, while its second-in-command, Morard de Galles, battled the fire. The mast and the mainmast of L'ANNIBAL were cut down. Finally, De Galles, though wounded, took command when Trémignon fell. Determined to break the fight as long as he kept a final mast, Suffren had his cable cut, but he had only five guy wires left out of a total of 34. L'ANNIBAL then stretched out her spare guy wires. But passing near The ISIS who had not been able to maneuver,

[75] ●And, in any case, extremely dangerous because of the land troops who were on board and who fed the French with a deadly cloud of musketry projectiles.

L'ANNIBAL took full force of an entire hull which brought down its last mast. L'ANNIBAL, transformed into a floating pontoon, was then towed by Le SPHINX to the outside of the bay by gunning the English. Meanwhile, some of the English ships had hoisted the sails and stalled south.

The fight had lasted an infernal hour and thirty minutes. L'ARTÉSIEN [Captain La Boissière], who had made an English capture [The INFERNAL], was ordered to let go of his catch to hold the English in respect while L'ANNIBAL and the others repaired themselves. But too eager to carry out this order, La Boissière abandoned The INFERNAL with its crew on board [22 French sailors], which was taken prisoner by the English. For this unforgivable mistake, he was sacked from the Marine Royale.

When the battle was over, Suffren ordered the French convoy to go downwind and resume its journey south. As for the warships, they set out in the line of battle to await the English warships in the bay. Commodore Johnstone hesitated, convened a Council of War of Captains, between 13:00 and 14:30, which decided to immediately set sail and abandon the battlefield. At 15:00, the English finally came out of the bay. Pursued by the French ships, they proceeded towards the French convoy of transports which sailed southward, as if they wanted to attack it [around 16:30]. Then the warships were engaged again in line of battle, but the English squadron did not attack; they resumed their retreat southward. Night finally fell. The French continued with all fires lit. The English took advantage of the darkness to disappear, all lights out.

At dawn, the horizon was empty. Too damaged, Johnstone had to return, incognito, to La Praya to repair his damage.

Casualties & Losses ●The French admitted 105 killed and 204 wounded, all but 19 being in Le HÉROS and L'ANNIBAL. ●The British admitted only 9 killed and 47 wounded; which leaves doubts about the veracity of the figures.

Consequence of this English defeat: Admiral Johnstone will be delayed 16 days to repair his damage. Moreover, he arrived at the Cape of Good Hope at the end of the month and, intimidated, did not dare (as he had received the mission), to attack the Cape of Good Hope where the French squadron was located, he left for England. "No accusation of misbehaviour lies against any of the British subordinates in this affair of Porto Praya, says William Clowes[76]. However, the captain of the ISIS was brought to a court-martial, and honourably acquitted of all the charges. The discredit of the surprise was not redeemed by any exhibition of intelligence, energy, or professional capacity, on the part of the officer in charge."

Sources & Readings ●Suffren et ses ennemis, La Varende, Flammarion, Paris, 1967. ●La Manoeuvre de La Praia, April 16th, 1781. Political, strategic and tactical study, based on numerous unpublished documents. Raoul Castex, Paris, 1912. ●History of the French in India, Colonel G.B., Malleson, CSI, Editions John Grant, Edinburgh, 1909. ●The Royal Navy, William Laird Clowes, 6 Vol. London. ●Le bailli de Suffren, Just-Jean-Etienne Roy, Fr. Joubert, Éditions Mame et fils, Tours, 1879. ●Vie de Suffren, Bescherelle aîné, Éditions Ardant, Limoges, 1873. ●Hier Suffren, Raymond d'Unienville, Éditeur Si., Port-Louis [Mauritius], 1979. ●Suffren dans l'Océan Indien, Claude des Prèsles, Éditions Economica, Paris, 1999. ●Suffren, l'Amiral Satan, Frédéric Hulot, Imp. SEPC, le Grand livre du mois, Paris, 1994. ●Suffren, Héros de l'Inde, Gustave-Joseph-Henri Landrieu, Édition J. Susse, Paris, 1944.

[76] In *The Royal Navy*, WL Clowes, Vol.III, p.548-549.

Naval battle of Fort Royal.

Date of the action: April 29th, 1781.

Location: Today Fort-de-France, capital city of the island of Martinique. Average geographical coordinates of the bay: 14° 34' North latitude and 61°04' West longitude.

Conflict: American War of Independence [5th September 1775-3rd September 1783, Treaty of Paris and Versailles].

Background: On April 29th, 1781, after a 36-day crossing while escorting a logistic supply convoy, Admiral de Grasse arrived in sight of Martinique, West Indies.

Military Leader in command ●Vice Admiral Hood. ●Admiral de Grasse.

Military Forces involved ●18 vessels on the English side- ●Probably as many on the French side.

Strategy or tactics: Linear battle in two parallel formations; with long cannonade.

Summury of the Action: Informed of the approach of the French convoy, Admiral Rodney gave 18 ships to Vice Admiral Hood. De Grasse, who had just received 4 reinforcement ships, saw the English squadron in front of Fort Royal. He attacked it. The battle lasted four long hours. Finally, the English stalled and the French squadron gave chase.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown. Damage only; no loss of ships.

Consequence of this English defeat: The French admiral was reproached for not having pursued the English squadron long enough to destroy it. But De Grasse had fulfilled his primary mission, which was to escort the French convoy to its destination.

Sources & Readings ●The Operations of the French Fleet under the Count de Grasse in 1781-1782, as described in two contemporary journals, François-Joseph Comte de Grasse, Shea. John Gilmary, New York, 1864. ●Admiral de Grasse and American Independence, by Charles Lee Lewis and John Francis Gough, New York, ●Fort-de-France, military city: 1639-1985, educational action project of the College of Coridon under the direction of Geneviève Léri, Impr. antillaise Saint-Paul, Fort-de-France, 1986. ●Petite histoire des grands vaisseaux du XVIII siècle, Loïc du Rostu, A.R.H.I.M.S., Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie, 1984. ●Les aventures de Louis-René de Latouche-Tréville, compagnon de La Fayette et commandant de L'Hermione dans la Guerre d'Indépendance Américaine, Rémi Monaque, préface de Jean-Louis Flot, S. P. M., Paris, 2000.

Naval Battle of the Chesapeake Bay.

Date of action: September 5th, 1781.

Location: East Coast of the United States, Average geographical coordinates of the battle area: 36°58'03''N&75°32'21''W.

Conflict: War of the American Revolution [September 5th, 1775 - September 3rd, 1783, Treaty of Paris & Versailles].

Background: The American colonials had not earlier gotten rid of the French by using England[77] than they used the power of France to get rid of their cumbersome motherland, England. On July 11, 1780, French ground troops sent to rescue the Americans arrived in Newport. Rochambeau commanded the French Expeditionary Force. The British invaded Carolina and Virginia and advanced to the Chesapeake area where they settled at Yorktown on July 6th, 1781. Admiral Hood arrived first, on August 25, at the entrance to the Chesapeake and continued north. Five days later, Admiral De Grasse arrived at the mouth of the same bay.

Military Leaders in command ●*Marine Royale*: Admiral François Joseph Paul de Grasse. ●*Royal Navy*: Rear-Admiral Thomas Graves [1725-1802], later Baron Graves. Admiral Samuel Hood, Bart [1724-1816], later Viscount Hood, second in command of the squadron after Graves. Rear-Admiral Francis Drake.

Military Forces involved: ●*Marine Royale*: 24 ships of the line participated in the battle[78]. ●Royal Navy: 27 ships, 19 of which are-of-the-line and several three-deck ships.

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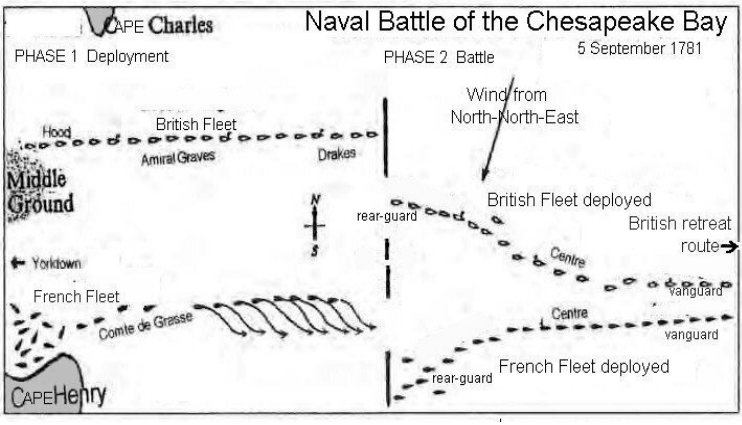
[77] Seven Years' War, ended in 1763.

[78] Order of battle of the Marine Royale: **Avant-garde**, Le PLUTON [74 guns, commandant Rions], Le MARSEILLAIS [74, Castellane-Majastre], Le BOURGOGNE [74, Charitte], Le RÉFLÉCHI [64, Brun], L'AUGUSTE]80, chef d'escadre Bougainville, capitaine Castellan), Le DIADÈME [74, Montclerc], Le SAINT-ESPRIT [80. CbabertJ, The CATON] 64, Framond) | **Battlebody**. Caesar [74, Espi- nouse], DESTINY [74..



Strategy or tactics: Seeing the arrival of the French army, George Washington, theoretically commander-in-chief of the Allied forces, decided to attack New York by surprise, by night offensive. Rochambeau, for his part, found it more logical to descend south to rescue La Fayette's small American army in difficulty, in cooperation with the French squadron of Admiral de Grasse. Together, they were to resume the offensive against the English army of General Cornwallis. This strategy was developed at the Ministry of the Navy in Paris. In the end, Rochambeau's opinion prevailed.

On August 14th, Washington marched its vanguard. On the 19th, the French army crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry. To deceive Clinton, an attack on New York was first feigned, then a cordon of 3,000 men was deployed to give the English the change and dissuade them from sending reinforcements to Virginia.

When the French squadron, in line, doubled Cape Henry, Rear-Admiral Graves missed the greatest opportunity in the world by not immediately attacking the French, on whom he could fall tailwind. He could have detached the vanguard before the rest of the French line could intervene. At the outset, he gave

the French line plenty of time to deploy. A mistake that cost England the loss of an empire.

Order of Battle	
MARINE ROYALE	**ROYAL NAVY**
VAN (Blanche & Bleue) 1-Le PLUTON 74, Cpt Rions **2-**Le MARSEILLOIS 74, Ct Castellane 3-Le BOURGOGNE 74, Cpt Charritte 4-Le DIADÈME 74, Capt Monteclerc 5- Le RÉFLÉCHI6 4, Capt. de Surville 6-L'AUGUSTE 80, c.d'e. Bougainville 7-Le SAINT-ESPRIT 80, Capt Chabert 8-Le CATON6 4, Capt. Framond **CENTRE** (Blanche) 9-Le CÉSAR 74, Capt. Coriolis 10-Le DESTIN 74, Capt Dumaitz 11-Le VILLE-DE-PARIS 104, deGrasse 12-Le VICTOIRE 74, Saint-Hippolyte 13-Le SCEPTRE 74, de Vaudreuil 14-Le NORTHUMBERLAND74,Bricqueville 15-Le PALMIER 74, Arros d'Argelos 16-Le SOLITAIRE 64, Champion de Cicé **REAR** (Bleue) 17-Le CITOYEN74, Captain d'Ethy 18-Le SCIPION 74, Captain de Clavel 19-Le MAGNANIME 74, de Germiny 20-L'HERCULE 74, Turpin du Breuil 21-The LANGUEDOC 80, c/e Monteil, 22-Le ZÉLÉ 74, Gras-Préville 23-L'HECTOR 74, Renaud d'Aleins 24-Le SOUVERAIN 74, Glandevès[79]	**VAN** [Rear during the battle] 1-ALFRED 74, Capt Bayne 2-BELLIQUEUX 64, James Brine 3-INVINCIBLE 74, Capt Saxton 4-BARFLEUR 98, r/adm Hood 5-MONARCH 74, Capt Reynolds 6-CENTAURE 74, John Inglefield **CENTRE** 7-AMERICA 64, Capt Thompson 8-BEDFORD 74, 9-RESOLUTION 74, 10-LONDON 98, 11-ROYAL OAK 74, 12-MONTAGU 74, 13-EUROPE64, **REAR** [Van during the battle] 14-TERRIBLE 74, 15-AJAX 74, 16-PRINCESSA 70, 17-ALCIDE 74, 18-INTREPID 64, 19-SHREWBURY 74, *27 warships including the frigates.*
Casualties 209	Casualties 314 (82killed, 232w.)

This battle was decisive because it gave control of the sea to the French, without destroying the naval potential of England[80]. It was rather the distribution of naval units throughout

[79] Of the 28 ships brought from the West Indies, De Grasse had left four at the mouth of the James River, with the frigates.

[80] ●For Clauzewitz: "It remains eminently true that great battles are fought only for the purpose of destroying the enemy's forces, and that this destruction can only be effected by means of the main battle" [On War, Book IV, Chapter XI], Compare with Sun Tzu: "To capture the enemy's army is better than to destroy it; to take intact a battalion,

the world that had been poorly assured, the English Merchant Lobbies having demanded from the Government of London a strengthening of the protection of the commercial lines in the Mediterranean and the Channel, to the great detriment of America. The ego of the merchants thus allowed American independence.

Summary of the action: Admiral de Grasse, then at Cap-Français[81], received, on July 6th, 1781, the order to sail to the Chesapeake Bay to support the land campaign of the Franco-Americans. The English Rear-Admiral Graves then proceeded to the same bay where he arrived first, on 25th August, and positioned himself in a good position, in principle to ambush or at least block the road to the French squadron coming from the West-Indies.

On 30th August, Monsieur de Grasse doubled Cape Henry and anchored in Lynnhaven Bay. He landed troops and sent four ships to block the James and York Rivers. Thus, Cornwallis was totally invested and blocked at Yorktown, on both the sea and the land side.

Admiral Hood was then at the head of 27 ships including 19 large ships-of-the-line formed in 3 squadrons.

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On September 5th, the British squadron came from the north, tailwind, in this formation, when they saw the French squadron at anchor, which, not expecting to be attacked, did not have all its strength: 1800 men and 90 officers had landed[82].

The alarm was immediately raised among the French, but the wind and the current carried ashore and pushed towards the

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company or squad of five men is better to destroy it" [*The Art of War*, ch. III, Principle 2], see in fine.

[81] Today Cap-Haïtien.

[82] As at the Battle of Damme [1213] and especially Aboukir [1798] where the incorrigible French will be surprised by Nelson, 17 years later. But in 1781, at the time of the Battle of the Chesapeake Bay, Nelson was still a 23-year-old sailor in Admiral Sir Hughes' squadron who was regularly beaten by the bailli de Suffren in the Indian Ocean.

bay; so it was necessary to swerve in this narrow channel 5 km wide between *Cape Henry* and Middle *Ground Bank*.

In order to gain time, De Grasse gave the order to spin the cables instead of raising the anchors. Within 15 minutes, all the ships had set sail. By 12:45 p.m., the French fleet had managed to overtake Cape Henry. Bougainville in the vanguard, De Grasse, in the center, on the VILLE-DE-PARIS[83] and De Monteil in the rearguard.

Instead of attacking the French while they were maneuvering, the English hesitated and made their way to the Middle Ground and then turned downwind, which placed them in a parallel line with the French who were completing their deployment.

Graves wanted to attack simultaneously the French Vanguard, the Centre and the Rearguard, respectively by his Vanguard, his Centre and his Rearguard. The English had the wind to themselves. Graves gave the signal for combat, but Bougainville maneuvered "so as to delay contact to give his Rearguard time to form." For his part, Hood continued in a straight line instead of attacking the French Centre.

The battle did not begin until around 16:00. Le RÉFLÉCHI, fifth in the French line, received the first British broadside and immediately lost its commander [Captain Bourdet]. The four leading ships were fighting against 7 or 8 English ships. The PRINCESSA [Drake] had set fire to Le DIADÈME and was preparing to approach him when Le SAINT ESPRIT [Commander Chabert] prevented him from doing so. Meanwhile, Bougainville directed the fire of his flagship L'AUGUSTE on the Englishman The TERRIBLE, which he damaged to such an extent that the crew had to scuttle the ship on 10th September.

The situation was rapidly changing in favour of the French and the English eventually abandoned the battlefield;

[83] ●The largest warship of the time, although The LONDON had... four more guns; the competitive spirit of the English could not resist this detail.

the downwind French remaining in position to interdict the Chesapeake Bay through which the Royal Navy could have come to the aid of the English army besieged by the Franco-Americans at Yorktown. The Chesapeake Battle was suspended. The English remained in sight for five days, but did nothing more against the French line that was desperately blocking the bay. Eventually, they turned around and disappeared behind the horizon, leaving Cornwallis' English army to its fate.

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: 220 killed and wounded. Le DIADÈME and Le CATON were damaged. ●*English*: 336 killed and wounded. Six damaged ships, so The PRINCESSA, The SHREWSBURY, The INTREPID, The AJAX, The MONTAGU and The TERRIBLE. The latter was burned and sunk on September 10th.

Consequence of this English defeat: It was a decisive victory. The British relief army [Sir Henry Clinton, 7000 men], which was arriving to reinforce the besieged English army at Yorktown, turned back and returned to New York. This led to the capitulation of Yorktown, England had permanently lost its Thirteen American Colonies[84].

The Battle of the Chesapeake was, according to the American historian Emil Reich, a **naval Waterloo** whose consequences were enormous.

Sources & Readings: ●Yorktown, by Alan Kemp, Almark Publishing, London, 1976. ●De Grasse at Yorktown, James Brown Scott, French Institute of Washington, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1931. ●French Aid to the American Revolution, Samuel F. Scott, William L. Clements Library, 1976. ●Redcoats and Rebels ; the War for America 1770-1781, Christopher Hibbert, Grafton, Londres, 1990. ●The French Navy and American Independence. A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774-1787, Jonathan R Dull, Princeton University USA, 1975.

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[84] ●And the fourteenth, Canada, will remain English only by the will of the French Government and thanks to the Catholic Clergy that the English had been able to stipend.

●The French Forces in America, 1780-1783, Lee Kennett, Westport, Connecticut & Greenwood Press, London, 1977. ●A short account of the naval actions of the last war; to prove that the French nation never gave such slender proofs of maritime greatness as during that period: with observations on the discipline and hints for the improvement of the British Navy, by an Officer, London, 1788.

Naval battle off Sadras.

Date of action: 17th February 1782.

Location: Bay of Bengal coast. The battlefield was 12 miles east Sadras and the French transports nine miles south-west. Geographical coordinates: 12°31'30" Latitude North & 80° 09' 44" East Longitude.

Conflict: American Revolutionary War [5th September 1775 – 3rd September 1783, Treaty of Paris and Versailles]. Conflict between Louis XVI's France and England of George III [1760-1820]. Operations in India.

Background: The French squadron was escorting a landing convoy destined to gain a foothold at Porto-Novo [India]. The purpose of the battle was to surprise the English squadron at anchor, fixing as a rallying point the harbor of Sadras.

On the17th December "the whole French force, under the command of d'Orves, sailed for the Coromandel Coast. On the way the British 50-gun ship the HANNIBAL, Captain Alexander Christie, was captured by the French. On the 9th of February, 1782, Comte d'Orves died, and Suffren found himself at the head of twelve ships-of-the-line: three "74 guns", seven "64", and two "50"[85].

Military Forces involved Suffren found himself at the head of twelve ships of the line: 3 "74 guns", 7 "64", and 2 "50". On the 15th, Hughes's fleet was sighted, under the guns of Madras. It numbered nine of the line: two "74", one "68", five "64", and one "50".

[85] ●One being the captured British HANNIBAL 50, which was commissioned by Captain Morard de Galles, retaining the English form of the name, HANNIBAL, to distinguish her from L'ANNIBAL 74, already in the French squadron became Le GRAND-ANNIBAL and the British one: Le PETIT-ANNIBAL.

Military leaders in command

●*French*: On the 9th of February, 1782, Comte d'Orves died, and le bailli de Suffren found himself at the head of twelve ships of the line. ●*English*: Rear-Admiral Hughes.

BRITISH AND FRENCH SQUADRONS IN THE ACTION OFF SADRAS, FEB. 17TH, 1782[86]	
French Squadron	**British Squadron[87]**
1-Le SÉVÈRE 64, Villeneuve-Cillart 2-Le VENGEUR 64, Capt. Forbin 3-Le BRILLANT 64, Capt. St.Félix 4-Le FLAMAND 50, Capt. Cuverville 5-L'ANNIBAL 74, Capt. Tromelin 6-Le HÉROS 74, chef/esc. Suffren 7-L'ORIENT 74, Capt. Lapellière 8-L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Bidé de Maurville 9-Le SPHINX 64, Capt. Chilleau 10-L'AJAX 64, Capt. Bouvet 11-L'HANNIBAL 50, Morard de galles 12-Le BIZZARE 64, Capt. Lalandelle Frigates and others: POURVOYEUSE 38, FINE 32, BELLONE 32, SUBTILE 22, SYLPHIDE 16, DILIGENT 10.	1-EAGLE 64, Capt. Ambrose Reddall 2-MONMOUTH 64, Capt. James Alms 3-WORCESTER 64, C. George Talbot 4-BURFORD 64, Capt. Peter Rainier 5-SUPERB 74, r/adm Edward Hughes 6-HERO 74, Capt. Charles Wood 7-ISIS 50, Capt. Thos. Chas. Lumley 8-MONARCA 68, Capt John Gell 9-EXETER 64, Comm. Richard King Frigates and others: SEAHORSE 24, MANILLA 14,
12 man-of-war; several frigates	**9 man-of-war and two frigates.**

Strategy or Tactics On the 15th, Hughes's fleet was sighted, under the guns of Madras. It numbered nine of-the-line: 2 "74", one "68", five "64", and one "50". Suffren stood south towards Pondicherry, which had passed into the protection of Hyder Ali. After nightfall Hughes got under way, and also steered south. He feared for Trincomalee, in Ceylon, recently a Dutch port unexpectedly captured by the British on the 5th of January. It was a valuable naval station, and as yet most imperfectly defended.

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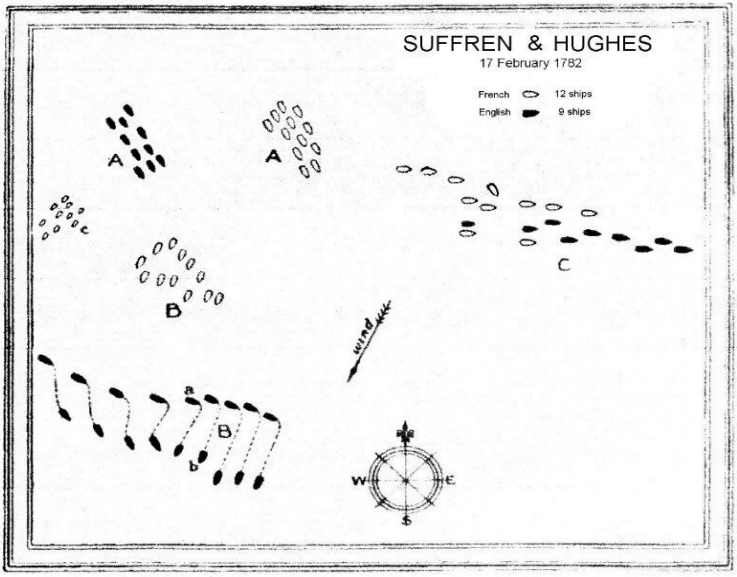
[86] ●Source: Clowes, Vol III, pp.549 ff.

[87] ●The British list is founded upon that in Beaton, vi. 298, Steel's 'Navy List' (1782), and dispatches. The French list, on Jacques Jérôme Antoine Trublet de Villejégu, *Histoire de la Campagne de l'Inde par l'escadre française, sous les ordres de M. le bailli de Suffren, année 1781, 1782, 1783* (1801).

The battle of Sadras was in parallel lines with cannonade and boarding. At first, two parallel battle lines. Then great disorder, so much so that it was long evoked as "a disorder *à la* Provédien". The first formation extended in a *northerly* direction and the second, in the direction of *Suroît*, bordered by the



SUFFREN AND HUGHES

sea, and then bordered by land while the coast was unknown to the French, but well known by the English.

During this battle of Sadras, Tromelin, either out of cowardice or vengeance, left the French squadron to fight alone and prevented his division from participating in the fight.

By 2:00 p.m. on April 12th, the two fleets were lined up in a south-north axis. ●The English line sailed downwind.

Summary of the action: On 14th February, the frigate La FINE reported the presence of the English squadron [9 warships] out of range of artillery protection of the English forts. Suffren immediately ordered the fighting and approached the English squadron, which returned under the protection of the fort's guns.

Suffren therefore convened a Council of War and as the attack on Porto-Novo was exposed, it was proposed to postpone the attempt. But De Salvert objected so as not to disappoint the local Indian princes who were also opposed to abandoning the campaign. The French squadron therefore set out again to land its ground troops at Porto-Novo. Passing in front of the harbor of Madras, the French saw that the English squadron was sailing and thought that it was preparing to come and disrupt the landing.

Towards the evening of the 14th, Rear-Admiral Hugh fired his squadron in the wind, threatening the convoy of French transports which received the order to pass under the leeward of the French protection squadron. The French convoy complied. The manoeuvre took a long time and the convoy lost, during the manoeuvre, a light division which sailed out of caution with all lights out. During the night, Hugh succeeds in an excellent maneuver. He slipped between the French squadron and his convoy of Transports.

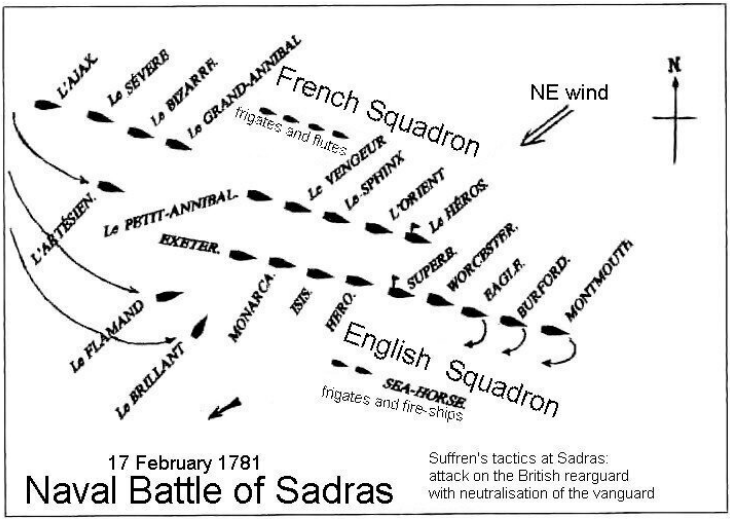
At dawn, Hugh detached five warships to relieve the French transports. Thus, Le LAURISTON, which had stopped to board an Indian ship, was captured in its turn; however, he transported all the field-artillery and a strong detachment of the Régiment de Lauzun. The flute Les BONS-AMIS, commanded by De Gaignières, was attacked by the frigate SEA-HORSE. Les BONS-AMIS, which had landed most of its artillery to serve as a troop transport, had on board the Régiment de Bourbon which received the SEA-HORSE under a deluge of infantry strafing. Forced to make a mid-turn in all haste, the SEA-HORSE retreated.

Two ships were taken back from the Royal Navy, which did not make the day very expensive for the Marine Royale which lost only one hospital ship, went to rest at Negapatam[88] where, by cunning, the English had hoisted a Dutch flag. Seeing that this squadron of the Royal Navy had the sole purpose of

[88] ●Dutch Port which had just been seized the English, by surprise.

heading for French transports, Suffren rushed south-west with all sails out to attack it. Hughes recalled his five ships with cannon fire to face the French.

On the evening of the 16th, the English squadron was sailing on a line to the south-east, *port side*[89]. The French squadron set itself on a line of battle parallel to that of the English. But



during the night, the confusion was put back in the lines.

On the morning of the 17th, the English line was sailing north-east, 15 km downwind, spaced vessels. Suffren gave the order to deploy in battle, but the wind was uncertain, and it took time. At 15:00, a squall breathed new life into the French sails that took advantage of it to get closer to the English and prepare for the attack. But in fact, the French were cut into four sections. Five ships led by Suffren went up the English line from the rear. Much further behind and upwind of the line, three French ships[90]; still further, L'AJAX and Le FLAMAND; and Le BRILLANT was even more isolated.

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[89] ●or port tack, that is to say wind coming from their left.
[90] ●Le GRAND-ANNIBAL, Le BIZARRE and Le SÉVÈRE.

With his five ships, Suffren doubled The EXETER, which he gunned copiously, then The MONARCA, The ISIS and The HERO, to finally stop next to the SUPERB, the English flagship. There, he lowered his sail to attach himself to him.

His next four ships attached themselves to an English vessel. Suffren ordered Tromelin and his division to move up the English line on the other side in order to catch the Royal Navy in pincers, *but Tromelin who hated Suffren refused to obey*. So, L'AJAX and Le FLAMAND wanted to leave Tromelin's line, but Tromelin ordered them to stay with him. AJAX reluctantly obeyed, but Le FLAMAND disobeyed Tromelin, followed by Le BRILLANT.

These two ships bypassed The EXETER, the last of the English line of battle, accompanying it, leeward, with their fire. The EXETER, which had previously received a hull from each of the four French ships sailing up the English line, was already in bad shape. He began to ask for help, but the otherwise busy English squadron did not respond to his distress calls.

Fortunately for him, Le BRILLANT received a lost ball, probably fired by the PETIT-ANNIBAL who accompanied The EXETER on the other side and which destroyed his gunnery lighthouse and mast. As a result, Le BRILLANT pivoted in the wind and presented her unarmed rear to The EXETER who, in a row, killed 60 men in a single row. After a few maneuvers, Le FLAMAND succeeded in taking the place of Le BRILLANT and continuing the cannonade on The EXETER. Seeing this, Hugh signaled the three vanguard ships to turn back to come to the aid of The EXETER which was dying under the blows of Le FLAMAND. Indeed, the English ship had raised the flag to signal that it was surrendering. But in the smoke, in the darkness of the evening that was falling, and also in the heat of the appalling battle, Le FLAMAND had not realized that The EXETER, a veritable floating cemetery, wanted to capitulate.

Seeing reinforcements coming, Suffren ordered Le FLAMAND to return to the line of battle, which he did. The

three English ships took The EXETER in tow and broke off the fight instead of attacking the French line. Night was falling.

The English squadron withdrew to Trinquemalee [Ceylon] which they had just taken from the Dutch. The French remained for a while on the battlefield, which had become deserted, then headed for Pondicherry to continue their mission: the escort of the logistical convoy. The convoy arrived there on the 19th.

According to Clowes, at daylight, "the British saw the French squadron 12 miles east (A, A) and its transports nine miles south-west (c). Hughes chased the latter and took six. Suffren pursued, but could not overtake before sunset, and both fleet steered south-east during the night. Next morning there were light north-north-east airs, and the French were 6 miles north-east of the British (B, B). The latter formed line on the port tack (a), heading to seaward. Hughes hoped that thus the usual sea-breeze would find him to windward. The breeze, however, did not make as expected; and, as the north-east puffs were bringing the enemy down, he kept off before the wind (b) to gain time for his ships to close their intervals, which were to0 great.

At 4:00 pm, the nearing French forced him to form a line again, heading east on the port tack. The rear ship, EXETER 64, was left unsupported at the back. Leading part of his fleet, Suffren passed windward of the British line up to Hughes's flagship, fifth from the front. There he stopped, and kept at half cannon-shot, to prevent the 4 van ships from tacking to relieve their consorts. It was his intention that the second half of his fleet should attack the other side of the English (D), but only two of them did so, engaging to leeward the extreme rear (C). The result was, to use Hughes's own words, that "the enemy brought eight of their best ships to the attack of 5 of ours." It will be noted with interest that these were exactly the numbers engaged in the first act of the battle of the Nile. The EXETER received the fresh broadsides of the first five of the enemy, and then remained in close action on both sides, assailed by two, and at last

by three, opponents, ---two 50, and one 64. When the third approached, the master of the ship asked Commodore Richard King, whose broad pennant flew at her masthead, "What is to be done?" "There is nothing to be done," replied Richard King, "but to fight her till she sinks." Her loss, 10 killed and 45 wounded, was not creditable under the circumstances to the French gunnery, which had been poor also at Porto Praya. At 6:00pm the wind shifted to south-east, throwing all on the other tack, and enabling the British van to come into action. Darkness now approaching, Suffren hauled off and anchored at Pondicherry. Hughes went on to Trincomale to refit.

At 4:00 pm, the nearing French forced him to form a line again, heading east on the port tack. The rear ship, EXETER 64, was left unsupported at the back. Leading part of his fleet, Suffren passed windward of the British line up to Hughes's flagship, fifth from the front.

Casualties & Losses ●*English*[91]: 137 killed and 430 wounded, ●*French*: 130 killed and 364 wounded. According to the English Historian Clowes, the British loss had been 32 killed, among whom were Captain William Stevens of the flagship, and Captain Henry Reynolds, of the EXETER, and 83 wounded. The French had 30 killed; the number of their wounded is unknown. The Professor Laughton gives us the round figure of… 100! That seems to be a bit of an exaggeration.

Consequences of this English setback:The French supply convoy arrived safely. Suffren was personally very distressed by Tromelin's refusal to obey. This seems to have been the reason why he did not pursue the retreating English squadron. In fact, despite having won the battle, the French lost a ship, the hospital ship of the convoy that had gone to land in the port of Negapatam, a Dutch port that the English had just taken and where, by cunning, they had let fly the Dutch flag. After Pondicherry,

[91] ●According to the English historian Malleson [*Final French Struggles in India and on the Indian Seas*, WMH Allen & Co., 13 Waterloo Place, London, 1878. See *in fine*.]

Suffren sailed to Porto-Novo, 100 km south of Pondicherry, to land troops. The Francophile Nawab Hyder Ali immediately sent 20,000 men there. On March 7th, the nawab sent the French a gift of 100,000 rupees and supplies.

The French transports anchored at Trinquebar[92] joined the squadron under the escort of the corvette La BELLEDONE [32 guns]. On 1st March, this corvette was seized from an English corvette which was rearmed by the French under the name Le CHASSEUR. From its coast, the corvette La SUBTILE [24 guns, Pas de Beaulieu] destroyed 15 large English merchants and delivered at the same time a French transport, probably Le LAURISTON, captured on February 15th by the English.

At Porto-Novo, Suffren completed his crews with Mohammedan natives, called "lascars"[93].

On the 12th of March, Hughes returned to Madras, and towards the end of the month sailed again for Trincomalee, carrying reinforcement and supplies. On the 30th he was joined at sea by the SULTAN 74, and the MAGNANIME 64, just from England.

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[92] ●Danish port.

[93] ● The word "lascar" derives from the Hindi lashkari ("soldier, native sailor"), Persian lashkar, Arabic al-'askar ("the army").

Presles, Éditions Economica, Paris, 1999. ●Suffren, l'Amiral Satan, Frédéric Mulot, Imp. SEPC, le Grand livre du mois, Paris, 1994. ●Suffren, héros de l'Inde, Gustave-Joseph-Henri Landrieu, Édition J. Susse, Paris, 1944. ●Le bailli de Suffren, Just-Jean-Etienne Roy, Fr. Joubert, Éditions Marne et fils. Tours, 1879. ●Vie de Suffren, Bescherelle aîné, Éditions Ardant, Limoges, 1873.

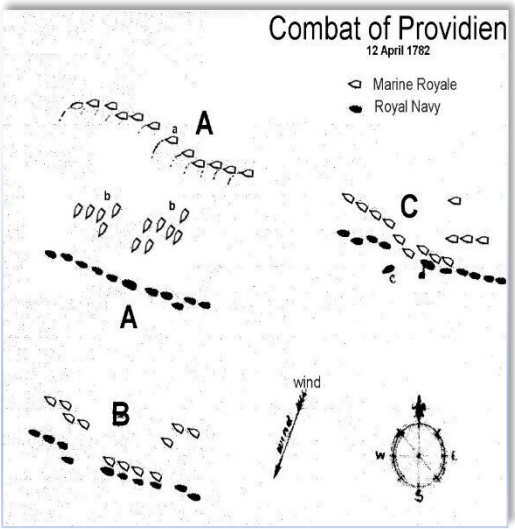
Naval battle off Provedian Islet.

Date of action: 12th April 1782.

Location: Bay of Bengal coast. Off Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Geographical coordinates: 8° 15' 18" North, 81° 30' 47" East. The battlefield was located 8 km off the coast of Ceylon. It is called Provedian Islet. Approximate geographical coordinates: 09°30' north latitude and 81º00' east longitude.

Conflict: American War of Independence [September 5th, 1775 – September 3rd, 1783, Treaty of Paris and Versailles.

Background: On the 12th of March, "Vice-Admiral Hughes returned to Madras, and towards the end of the month sailed again for Trincomale, carrying reinforcements and supplies. On the 30th, he was joined at sea by The SULTAN 74, and The MAGNANIME 64, just from England. Suffren had remained on the coast for reasons of policy, to encourage Hyder Ali in his leaning to the French. But, after landing a contingent of troops on the 22nd of March, to assist at the siege of the British port of Cuddalore (Gondelour), he put to sea on the 23rd, and went south, hoping to intercept the SULTAN 74 and The MAGNANIME 64 off the south end of Ceylon.



Military leaders in command ●*English*: Vice-Admiral Edward Hugues. ●*French*: Le Bailli de Suffren[94].

Military Forces involved

Naval Battle of Provedian	
ROYAL NAVY	MARINE ROYALE
1-EXETER 64, Commod. Richard King 2-HERO 74, Capt. Charles Hawker 3-ISIS 50, Capt. Thos. Chas. Lumley 4-BURFORD 64, Capt. Peter Rainier 5-MONARCA 68, Capt. John Gell 6-SUPERB 74, v/adm. Edward Hughes 7-MONMOUTH 64, Capt. James Alms 8-WORCESTER 64, C. George Talbot 9-EAGLE 64, Capt. Ambrose Reddall 10-SULTAN 74, Capt. James Watt 11-MAGNANIME 64, Ch. Worseley	1-Le VENGEUR 64, Forbin 2-L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Maurville 3-Le PETIT-ANNIBAL 50,Morard 4-Le SPHINX 64, du Chilleau 5-Le HÉROS 74, Suffren 6-L'ORIENT 74, des Pallières 7-Le BRILLANT 64, Saint-Félix 8-Le SÉVÈRE 64, Capt. Cilliart 9-L'AJAX 64, Capt. Bouvet 10-L'ANNIBAL 74, Tromelin 11-Le FLAMAND 50, Cuverville 12-Le BIZARRE 64, Lalandelle
Frigates & others: SEAHORSE 24, COMBUSTION 14	**Some frigates**

Strategy or Tactics: Battle in parallel lines with cannonade and bording. The two squadrons were anchored so close to each other that Suffren took up a fighting position.

Hughes, however, had a convoy to protect, and sailed for Trinquemalee. Suffren retreated south and anchored at Batticaloa, which was still under Dutch rule, and spent six weeks repairing.

Summary of the action: On the morning of April 12th, the two battle lines were sailing parallel 12 km apart. The English battle line, oriented south-north and closer to the coast, was leeward of the French. But the east wind remained unstable and suggested a grain.

After a complete rapprochement, only the center of the French line of battle sailed within pistol range. The others, with Captain Tromelin, had refused to approach[95] and were

[94] ●A "bailli" was a title of dignity in the Order of Malte.

[95] ●Either to oppose Suffren whom Tromelin hated, or out of cowardice. By his action he disgraced his family, who had to change their name (Jacques Marie Boudin de Tromelin, Chevalier de La Nuguy) to be La Nuguy-Tromelin. This was easy for aristocrats

cannoning from afar without any effectiveness. Seven French ships therefore remained useless, the five rearguard and the two leading.

In the center, the flagships Le HÉROS 74 and The SUPERB 74 were unleashed against each other. Battle of admirals, Hugh in full dress and Suffren scruffy like a pirate. Suffren, on board Le HÈROS[96], set fire to the SUPERB and threw himself on The MONMOUTH after ordering L'ORIENT to continue the attack on The SUPERB which was trying with difficulty to extinguish its fires.

Meanwhile, the artillery of Le HÉROS knocked down one after the other all the masts of the MONMOUTH: the topmast aft, then the mast of mizzen and, finally, the great mast which fell with an immense crash. It was panic aboard the MONMOUTH which left the English line and, distraught, began to whirl. Seeing that the French were about to board it, The SUPERB, which had succeeded in extinguishing its fires, went up in line and courageously interposed itself between Le HÉROS, and The MONMOUTH, completely devastated and reduced to the state of floating pontoon.

Le HÉROS having finally been hit too, L'ORIENT threw itself on The SUPERB which set fire to its mainsail. Le BRILLANT intervened and allowed L'ORIENT to die out its fire.

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who accumulated the names of all their estates. On the other hand, a small island [1 km^2] of the Indian Ocean has kept his name, east of Madagascar, by 15°52' of the south latitude and 54°25' of east longitude. In the island, a runway and an automatic weather station. In 1790, Tromelin-La Nuguy requested a leave of absence from the Navy. He was then denounced by a priest loyal to the Republic, and imprisoned. A friend convinced Jeanbon Saint-André to have him freed, and Tromelin-La Nuguy resigned from the Navy. He then requested permission to leave for Isle de France, but actually emigrated to join the Armée des Princes fighting against France. The French Republic listed him as an émigré and his property was seized. Tromelin-La Nuguy returned to France in 1797 before going to Copenhagen and embarking on the Danish East Indiaman *Norge*. He died aboard on 4 December 1798. Tromelin, whose manoeuvre was the object of the mockery of the sailors, offered his journal to M. de Suffren; and, although it must be presumed that he had sought to mitigate his faults in it, Suffren said to him when he handed it to him the next day: "Well! I still say that you have soiled the flag."

[96]●Admiral Raoul Castex, the famous French sea strategist, paid tribute to Suffren by speaking of "*one of the three immortal names that mark the sailing navy*" with de Ruyter and Nelson.

The HERO [English HERO] maneuvered to shelter itselfbehind the MONTMOUTH, to extinguish in turn.

Finally, Tromelin and the rest of the French squadron approached the enemy at around 15:45. The English Admiral then ordered the English squadron to disengage and stall. Suffren immediately maneuvered to pursue the English; but at 17:00, Le HÉROS lost his little hunier. Seeing himself unable to maneuver effectively, Admiral Suffren jumped into a canoe and, rowing, headed for L'AJAX 64, which became his flagship. After which, the French admiral took over the pursuit of the English squadron which was trying to put itself under the protection of the coast well known to them alone, in the vicinity of the island of Provédien, behind sandbanks. The battle had lasted five hours and twelve minutes. The storm, which had threatened all day, broke out, precipitating the fall of the day. Shortly after 17:00, L'AJAX hit one of the many dangerous sandbanks and Suffren gave the order to abandon the pursuit.

Taking refuge behind his sandbanks and humiliated, the English admiral refused the exchange of prisoners offered to him by Suffren, preferring to abandon his own fellow citizensin the hands of the French.

The two squadrons remained face to face for four days. The Royal Navy squadron behind the sandbanks and the French at sea. On the morning of the 17th, Suffren proposed to the English a new battle in deep water, but the English admira refused. So the French ships gunned the English for two full days, on the 17th and 18th, hopingto force them out of their retreat. But the Royal Navy, humiliated, couldsuffer this bombing from a distance rather than accept close combat.

On the 19th, seeing that he would not be able to get them out, Suffren swore and took the road to Baticoala[97], on the eastern coast of Sri Lanka[98]. The French gone, the English squadron returned to Trinquemale.

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[97] ●A small river-fort where the Dutch had built a post, 120 km south of Trinquemale.
[98] ●Formerly Ceylon,

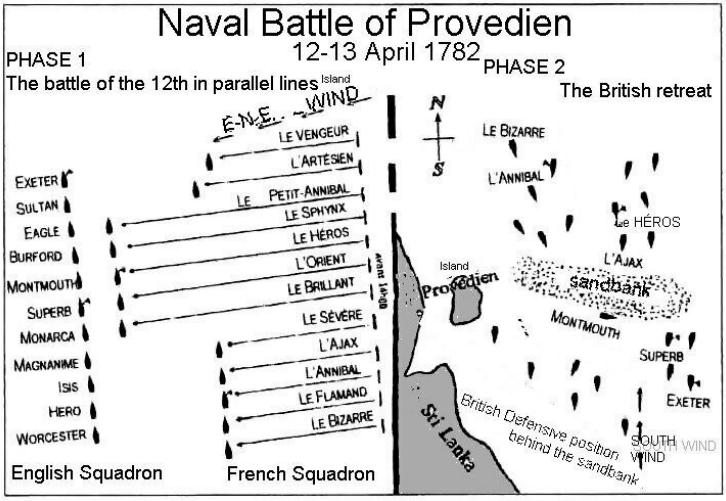
Suffren thus began to approach the English line to pistol range. As for the last French ship, Le BIZARRE 64, it was ordered to bypass the English rearguard and raise it by the West in order to take the English ships between two fires. The French were now 8 km from the shore. Suffren guessed that the English wanted to go up to the northern tip of Ceylon to escape tailwind through the strait. So, without further delay, he arrived on the west flank within pistol range of the English and began to attack them by righting himself and presenting the port flank to the enemy.

In carrying out this maneuver, Le VENGEUR 64 and L'ARTÉSIEN 64 straightened too far ahead of the English squadron. The English began to cannon them but from too far. The cannonballs fell into the water. By noon, it was evident that the order of progress had been badly executed by the French rearguard and vanguard.

On the 9th of April, ''Suffren sighted the British squadron to the south and west of him. Hughes, attaching the first importance to the strengthening of Trincomalee, had resolve neither to seek nor to shun action. He therefore continued his course, light northerly airs prevailing, until the 11th, when, being about fifty miles to the north-east of his port, he bore away for it.

Next morning, April 12th, finding that the enemy could overtake his rear ships, he formed line on the starboard tack, at two cables' intervals, heading to the westward, towards the coast of Ceylon, wind north by east, and the French dead to windward (A, A). Suffren drew up his line on the same tack, parallel to the British (a), and at 11:00 am gave the signal to steer west-south-west all together; his vessels going down in a slanting direction, each steering for one of the enemies. Having twelve ships to eleven, the twelfth was ordered to place itself on the off side of the rear British, which would thus have two antagonists.

In such simultaneous approach it commonly occurred that the attacking line ceased to be parallel with the enemy's, its van becoming nearer and rear more distant. So it was here. Further,



the British opening fire as soon as the leading French were within range, the latter at once hauled up to reply. Suffren, in the centre, wishing closest action, signalled them to keep away again, and himself bore down wrathfully upon Hughes to within pistol-shot; in which he was supported closely by his next ahead and the two next astern.

The rear of the French remained too far distant. Their line, therefore, resembled a curve, the middle of which ---four or five ships--- was tangent to the British centre (B).

At this point the heat of the attack fell upon Hughes's flagship, The SUPERB 74, (C, d), and her next ahead, The MONMOUTH 64 (c). Suffren's ship, Le HÉROS, having much of her rigging cut, could not shorten sail, shot by The SUPERB, and brought up abreast The MONMOUTH. The latter, already hotly engaged by one of her own class, and losing her main and mizzen masts in this unequal new contest, was forced at 3:00 pm to bear up out of the line. The place of Le HÉROS alongside The SUPERB was taken by L'ORIENT 74, supported by Le

BRILLANT 64; and when The MONMOUTH kept off, the attack of these two ships was reinforced by the half-dozen stern chasers of Le HÉROS, which had drifted into the British Line, fired into The SUPERB's bows. The conflict between these five ships, two British and three French, *was one of the bloodiest in naval annals*, says Clowes. The loss of The SUPERB was 59 killed and 96 wounded, and of The MONMOUTH, 45 killed and 102 wounded, equaled that of the much larger vessels that bore the flag of Nelson and Collingwood at Trafalgar. The loss of the three French was 52 killed and 142 wounded; but to this should be added properly that of Le SPHINX, 64, The MONMOUTH's first adversary: 22 killed and 74 wounded.

At 3:40 pm, fearing that if he continued steering west he would get entangled with the shore, Hughes wore his ships, forming line on the port tack. The French also wore, and Suffren hoped to secure The MONMOUTH, which was left between the two lines; but the captain, Hawker, of The HERO, ran a towrope to her in time, and she was thus dragged out of danger.

At 5:40, Hughes anchored, and Suffren did the same at 8:00 pm.

The exhausted enemies remained at anchor in the open sea, two miles apart, for a week, repairing. On the 19th of April, the French got under way and made a demonstration before the British, inviting battle, yet not attacking; but the condition of The MONMOUTH forbade Hughes from moving. Suffren therefore departed to Batacalo, in Ceylon, south of Trincomale, where he covered his own convoys from Europe, and flanked the approach of his adversary's. Hughes, on the 22nd of April, got into Trincomalee, where he remained till June 23rd. He then went to Negapatam, formerly a Dutch possession, but then held by the British. There he learned that Suffren, who meanwhile had captured several British transports, was a few miles north of him, at Cuddalore, which had surrendered to Hyder Ali on April 4th. The MONMOUTH was the first ship to leave the English line after being dismasted, and The SUPERB suffered severe damage in the early stages of the battle. Hughes was able

regain the advantage by ordering his squadron to turn and change tack. Then the battle began to turn away from the two combatants.

Casualties & Losses: *French*: 139 dead, 364 wounded. *English*: 137 dead, 430 wounded. ●*French*: five officers killed, 220 men killed or wounded; 1/10 of the force. ●*English*: The SUPERB, the English flagship, and the MONTMOUTH were badly damaged. Equivalent human beings.

Consequences of this French tactical victory: A violent storm prolonged by the night, interrupted the battle which thus remained undecided. It was a tactical victory for the French, but this fight showed that the commanders of two ships, Le VENGEUR and L'ARTÉSIEN, were ill-tempered and refused to obey Suffren. While in the Royal Navy they would have been court-martialed and shot dead, in the Marine Royale they were protected by their powerful aristocratic families.

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John Grant, Edinburgh, 1909. ●Le bailli de Suffren, Just-Jean-Etienne Roy, Fr. Joubert, Éditions Marne et fils, Tours, 1879. ●Vie de Suffren, Bescherelle aîné, Éditions Ardant, Limoges, 1873.

Naval Battle of Les Saintes.

Other name: Naval Battle of Dominica.

Date of action: April 12, 1782.

Location: Small archipelago located in Guadeloupe and the island of Dominica in the West Indies. Average geographical coordinates of the archipelago: 15° 86'N and 61° 61'W.

Conflict: American War of Independence [September 5th, 1775 – September 3rd, 1783, Treaty of Paris & Versailles].

Background: After conquering many English islands in the Caribbean, De Grasse set sail from Saint-Pierre de la Martinique[99] on 8th April 1782 with 35 vessels, 6 frigates or corvettes and a convoy of 150 troop transports assembled for an expedition against Jamaica. An unfortunate collision occurred on the night of April 11th and forced the French to tow a ship. On the 12th, De Grasse was confronted by Rodney's English fleet, which numbered 37 ships and fifteen frigates. *Six French ships were ordered to continue with the convoy* while 29 remained to block the passage of the English squadron. French morale was high, bolstered by a long series of naval victories over the English.

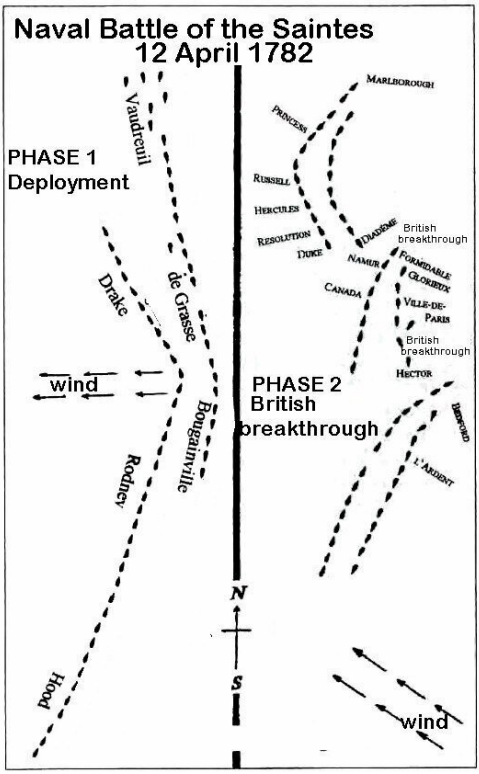
Military leaders in command: *Marine Royale*: Admiral Comte de Grasse, ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral Rodney and his second in command Sir Samuel Hood. The 3rd in command was Rear Admiral Drake.

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: 37 ships carrying 3012 guns and fifteen frigates. So, a numerical superiority of *8 ships*

[99] ●Port city that would be destroyed 20 years later by the volcano called Mount Pelée. It was then the administrative capital. Fit for complete destruction, Fort-Royal became the capital-city.

of the line and 766 guns. ●*Marine Royale*: 29 ships carrying 2246 guns.

Strategy or tactics: The parallel battle lines were roughly oriented North-South. The French sailed south and the English to the north. The wind from the E.S.E., passed to the S.-S.-E. Around 10:30 a.m. Admiral Rodney commanded the Centre, facing De Grasse; Hood, the rearguard facing the French vanguard of Bougainville and Drake, the English vanguard facing the French rear of Vaudreuil. Lieutenant-General Vaudreuil, second in command of the squadron, wrote in his report at Versailles: "All English warships have on their gaillards a quantity of caronnades[100] whose effect could not be more deadly. It was these new weapons that landed us on April 12th. An anecdote deserves to be told in order to measure the exceptional naivety (and even stupidity) of certain French aristocrats: "Admiral Rodney was then in Paris where he was detained for debts that he could not pay. One day when he was dining at the home of the French Marshal de Biron, he treated with disdain—very disparaging for his



[100] ●Big short guns made in Loch Carron in Scotland; already mentioned *above*.

host—the successes of the French sailors, saying that[101], if he were free, he would soon defeat the French. The French Marshal de Biron paid his debts and said, "Leave, monsieur. Go try to fulfill your promises. The French do not want to take advantage of the obstacles that prevent you from accomplishing them." This gave the English victory of the Saintes. It was a masterstroke in the art of stupidity on the part of Biron. In England, Biron would undoubtedly have been shot. The Goddess of Victory (Nike) is so fickle that it is unwise to play with her fidelity. In any case, this English victory had no strategic consequences.

In addition, the English have adopted cannon plates that allow them to point infinitely better than the French. It was a hand-to-hand combat on boarding, and a point-blank cannonade for which the English ships were not only more numerous but better armed, because the Royal Navy had momentarily fallen behind in terms of technical progress.

Summary of the action: At first, the French had the advantage of the east wind. All was well for them, despite their numerical inferiority, until the moment when the valley turned south-south-east, which led to a certain wavering in the French line which tried to respect the formation given. Rodney, for his part, threw himself into the melee. He managed to cross the French line by a space behind Le VILLE-DE-PARIS, the French flagship.

Subjected to the precise fire of the English and assailed by a dozen large English ships, the VILLE-DE-PARIS fought with rage. He eventually ran out of gurgle[102] and his gunners loaded his guns "with a *spoon*[103]", which deprived any precision to their fire.

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[101] Louis-Antoine de Gontaut, 6th Duc de Biron (2nd February 1701 – 19th October 1788) was a French aristocrat. He became Duc de Biron in 1739 and ended his career as Marshal of France.

[102] ●Standard loads of bagged powder. The bag slipped into the barrel behind the cannonball.

[103] ●By the spoonful, i.e. loose, bulk. The amount of powder then lacked precision.

Encircled, with 2/3 of his crew out of action, Admiral de Grasse refused to transfer to another ship and even to be towed by Le PLUTON. He fought all day until 6:30 p.m. Running out of cannonballs, the French gunners loaded their guns with anything they could find metallic, including the admiral's silver dishes. Then, and only then, De Grasse gave the order to Captain Lavilléon to lower the flag.

Despite their great numerical superiority, the exhausted English did not continue. Admiral Rodney himself explained the reason[104]: "The length of the battle was such that it damaged most of our Vanguard and Centre, as well as some ships of the Rearguard. As a result, pursuing at night would have been grossly inadequate. Moreover, the prisoners on board the catches could not have been transferred, and these catches, accompanied by the extremely damaged vessels of the British fleet, would have been exposed to recapture by the French prisoners. The night was extremely dark, and the enemies who moved away in grouped Corps, could have defeated, by rotation, the ships that escorted them, and thus would have exposed the British fleet, after a victory, to a defeat."

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Royale*: De Grasse was taken prisoner, the big flagship VILLE-DE-PARIS taken. Four other ships fell into the hands of the English, but in such a state of damage that not a single one reached England. ●*Royal Navy*: all English ships were also more or less damaged.

Consequence of this French defeat: In fact, the Battle of the Saintes had no repercussions on the American War of Independence which was already won by the French and the Celtic Exiles. It did, however, save Jamaica, although an English historian has written that this English island was saved more by the indecision of the French than by this battle.

De Grasse was taken as a prisoner of war to England where he was received with the highest honours, even if he was the one

[104] ●Quoted by G.B. Mundy, Life and Correspondence of Admiral Lord Rodney.

who, all things considered, was responsible for the final loss, by the English, of their Thirteen American Colonies, by defeating the Royal Navy in the Chesapeake Bay. He was as well received in England as his opponent Rodney in France.

Sources & Readings ●Mémoire du comte de Grasse sur le combat naval du 12 avril 1782, avec les plans des positions principales des armées respectives, François Joseph Paul, marquis de Grasse-Tilly, 1 782. ● The Dominica Story. A History of the Island, Lennox Honychurch, The Dominica Institute, 1984. ●The Life and Correspondence of the Late Admiral Lord Rodney, Godfrey Basil Mundy, 2 vol, London, 1830. ●The Naval Achievements of Admiral George Lord Brydges Rodney, To Which is Added, Thoughts on the conduct of the late Minority, now the present Ministry of Great Britain. A. Tweedie, Series: Adams and Bonwick, British Pamphlets. 1083, W, Darling, 1782. ●The Caribs and Their colonizers. The Problem of Land, by Hilary Frederick, 35 Ludgate Hill, London, 1982.

Naval battle of Negapatam.

Date of action: 6th July 1782.

Location: Bay of Bengal coast. Nagappatinam. Geographical coordinates: Latitude 10° 46' North, Longitude 79° 50' East.

Conflict: American Revolutionary War [5th September 1775 – 3rd September 1783, Treaty of Paris & Versailles]. Conflict between Louis XVI's France and England of George III [1760-1820].

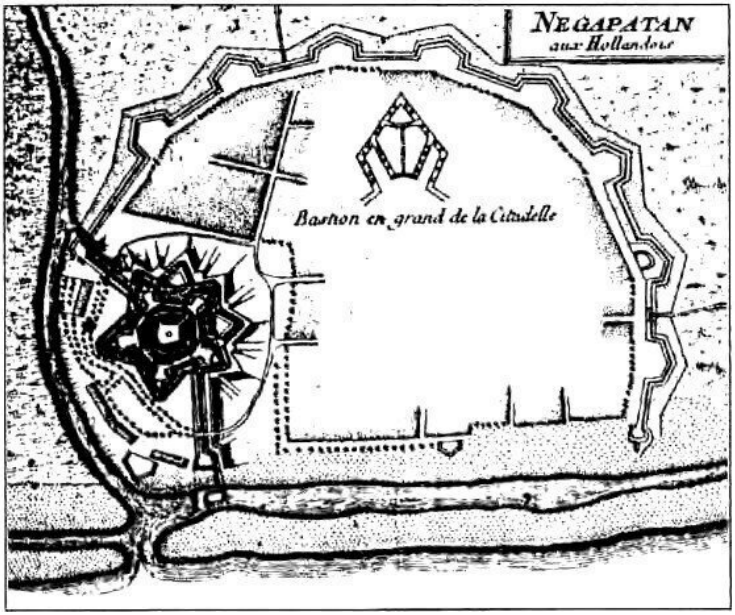
Context: In India, France's policy was favourable to Hyder Ali, who resisted English expansion in that part of the world. In 1781, however, the Bailli de Suffren, who commanded the French squadron on the Coromandel coast [Indian Carnate], was ordered by the Minister of the Navy to proceed to the Isle of France in the Mascarenes, to complete his supplies and to await a reinforcement from France. But Suffren refused to abandon Hyder Ali to its fate and the Coromandel coast to the English admiral Hugues. He knew, in fact, that only the presence of the French squadron maintained the alliances with the local princes and Hyder Ali. He therefore supplied the ships of the French squadron at Baticaola, where he landed 1,500 scurvy patients.

The Dutch, masters of Baticaola, did not cooperate well. In fact, the English took advantage of the fact that the historical bumps in the road put the Dutch on the side of the French this time to confiscate their Indian trading posts: Sadras, Pulicat, Negapatam, as well as Trinquemalee and Fort Ostenburgh in Ceylon[105]. On the 5th, the French anchored in the Danish port of Trinquebar,

[105] ●Today Sri Lanka.

On 15th June, they captured the old RESOLUTION, an English relic that Cook had once sailed around the world, and on 16th of June, The YARMOUTH and The RAILLEUR.

On July 3rd, Suffren completed his crew with lascars [Ma-



hometan Indians], embarked field artillery to eventually besiege Negapatam and headed south. After some searching, he spotted the English at Trinquemalee. The French squadron paraded in front of the port, offered them a fight, but they did not come out. In order to flush them out, Suffren sailed away and on 6th July, the English finally set sail. Suffren launched himself on them and met them off Negapatam.

But at 14:00, a storm almost sank L'AJAX, which lost its mizzen and parrot masts. Suffren sent La BELLONE to help repair the damage. It was then that the English took the advantage of the wind. Suffren broke down and anchored while waiting for L'AJAX.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Sir Edward Hughes. ●*Marine Royale*: Le Bailli de Suffren[106].

Military Forces Involved	
Royal Navy	**Marine Royale**
1-HMS EXETER 64, 2-HMS HERO 74, 3-HMS IRIS, 50 4-HMS BURFORD 64, 5-HMS SULTAN 82, 6-HMS SUPERB 74, 7-HMS MONARCH 70, 8-HMS WORCESTER 64 9-HMS MONTMOUTH 64 10-HMS EAGLE 64, 11-HMS MAGNANIME 64, *Frigates: Seahorse, Combustion*	1-Le FLAMAND [50 guns], 2-Le GRAND-ANNIBAL [74], 3-Le BRILLANT 64, Saint-Félix, 64 4-Le SÉVÈRE 64, 5-Le SPHINX [64], 6-Le HÉROS [74], 7-Le PETIT-ANNIBAL*50, 8-L'ARTÉSIEN 64, 9-Le VENGEUR 64, 10-L'ORIENT 74, capt. Des Pallières Frigates: BELLONE, FINE.
TOTAL 11 men-of-war	TOTAL 10 men-of-war

Strategy or tactics: In the French ships were piled up many English prisoners. They literally encumbered the ships. Suffren had asked the English admiral Hugues to exchange them[107], but the latter, humiliated by his successive defeats, had refused. His surprising refusal was confirmed by the English Government in Madras. Suffren had therefore decided to get rid of the prisoners by sending them to the Mogul and the English prisoners were crying like children, knowing that this cruel potentate would perhaps torture them. An English "cutter"[108] came along, under the parlementary flag, to claim Le SÉVÈRE [Ciliart de Suvilue]. The latter had "*lowered the flag*" the day before and then "re-opened' fire on The SULTAN, which was sending a prize crew to her.

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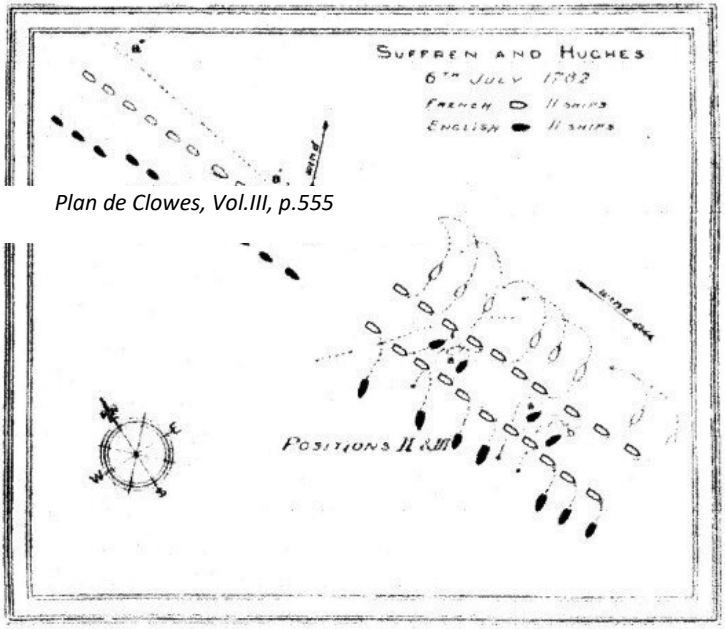
[106] ●Le Bailli de Suffren de Saint-Tropez, Lieutenant-General of the naval forces of his Most Christian Majesty.

[107] ●At the battle of Providenciales. Later on. Suffren renewed his offer. But this time the refusal was intended to hinder the French ships. The suffering of the English prisoners was of little importance to the English admiral.

[108] ●*Cottre* or *cotre* in French.

Suffren replied that Le SÉVÈRE had not lowered her flag, but that a cannonball had torn it from her. As Admiral Hugues insisted, Suffren shouted to the parliamentarians: *"If Hugues wants Le SÉVÈRE, he just has to come and take it*." Which Hugues did not.



Plan de Clowes, Vol.III, p.555

According to the enquiry that followed, this is what happened: Le SÉVÈRE fought hard against The BURFORD and came out badly damaged, with only part of her sails. She was then caught in the crossfire of three English ships [including The SULTAN, 74 guns, which was cannonading her starboard side] who wanted to finish her off. Behind him, on his quarter, struck a 64-gun ship, and a 74-gun ship on his port side. Seeing himself on the point of succumbing, Cillart ordered two infantrymen to lower the flag. They refused. He then had one of his sailors bring it in. The three English ships then ceased their cannonade, and The SULTAN broke down to send a prize crew boat. It was then that the French batteries screamed with fury.

The French crew became threatening to Cillart, who was confined to his quarters by two gunboat lieutenants. These officers, Dieu and Rosbo, were in command of the batteries on Le SÉVÈRE. They re-raised the flag and resumed the cannonade on The SULTAN, which was broken by the beam in relation to the wind; the English ship received horrible and cruel broadsides. The SULTAN then moved away from the battlefield and Le SÉVÈRE returned to take her place in the French line.

Summary of the action: At dawn on the 6th, as L'AJAX was not yet repaired, Suffren had the French squadron weigh anchor. The wind was from the west. The French line, *port tack*[109], ran parallel to the English battle line in the north-westerly wind. But the two lines were too far apart. So, in order to get closer, the French line turned to go down South and the two battle lines came together on opposite sides. Neither was even. The British turned to straighten their own line and the two formations went together in parallel.

Then the vanguards suddenly burst into flames: the guns thundered in the smoke. The rearguards did not participate. The BIZARRE, not seeing a signal from Suffren, went out of the line to ask for confirmation. Suffren sent him to the rear.

The change of direction had been poorly executed by the lead ships. They had become separated from the six French ships which were well grouped and facing the English line. The English rearguard was also late. Hugues therefore decided, as a ruse, to keep his SUPERB[110] in front of Le HÉROS[111]. Thus, the French FLAMAND [Cuverville], at the head,

Le FLAMAND 50 was in battle with the two English ships in front. But Cuverville received them in a fire of hell. Le FLAMAND was drawn into the English line, crushed by the cannonballs and *dense infantry fire*; and lost 80 men. On the other side, the two English ships [The EXETER and The

[109] ●*i.e.* wind to the left.
[110].●Sixth in the English line.
[111] ●Suffren, fifth in the French line.

HERO] were themselves damaged: The HERO lost its guns and the other, The EXETER, ceased firing and left the line of battle to repair without even asking permission. Le PETIT-ANNIBAL fought against The ISIS. Le BRILLANT [Saint-Félix, 64 guns] against The SULTAN [74 guns]. Le BRILLANT suffered a lot against the stronger, lost its mainmast and was attacked by several English ships. Suffren [Le HÉROS] then came to its rescue, interposed himself with a terrible fire and freed Le BRILLANT. Behind Le HÉROS, Le SPHINX [64] took charge of the English flagship The SUPERB [74]. Meanwhile, Le SÉVÈRE [Cillart] was also fighting hard. It was an organized melee. However, at about 13:00, the wind suddenly shifted to the South and the two lines were thrown into great disorder. The French then tacked back to the North and regrouped towards the dismasted BRILLANT, helpless and unable to maneuver, which was drifting downwind of the French in the middle of the English line. In the general disorder, the English began a retreat towards Negapatam. The ships were gunning each other at random. Le HÉROS tried to board The SUPERB as it passed, but the English flagship evaded. Furious, Le HÉROS sent a broadside at the stern of the SUPERB, which unleashed a mass of howls and *"God Damned"* on the deck of the English ship. Le SÉVÈRE was hit hard.

Finally, the English squadron did not retreat, but ceased the fight as soon as they were to windward of the French. They anchored in this position. The French squadron, downwind, was therefore unable to approach the English to attack them. Suffren proposed combat, but the English did not move. He launched a series of provocations against the Royal Navy, swearing and even insulting the English; all in vain. So, he ordered his squadron to return to Karikal, 10 km to the north.

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Royale*: about 100 killed and 400 wounded, i.e. 1/8 of the strength out of action [killed or wounded]. ●*Royal Navy*; also severe losses.

Consequence of this English defeat: This battle was not decisive. Rather, it served the French well. The next day, the French

squadron sailed to Gondelour. Cillart [Le SÉVÈRE], De Maurville [L'ARTÉSIEN], De Forbin [Le VENGEUR] and Bouvet [L'AJAX] were punished for lack of bite.

Sources & Readings ●*Suffrcn et ses ennemis*, La Varende, Flammarion, Paris, 1967. ●*History of the French in India,* Colonel G.B., Malleson, CSI, John Grain Publishing, Edinburgh, 1909. *Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, *The Royal Navy*, vol. II. London. ●*Le bailli de Suffren*, Just-Jean-Etienne Roy, Fr. Joubert, Editions Marne & fils, Tours, 1879. ●*Vie de Suffren*, Bescherelle aîné, Éditions Ardant, Limoges, 1873. ●*Hier Suffren*, Raymond d'Unienville, Éditeur SI, Port-Louis [Mauritius], 1979. ●*Suffren in the Indian Ocean*, Claude Des Presles, Éditions Economies, Paris, 1999. ●*Suffren, l'Amiral Satan*, Frédéric Hulot, lmp. SEPC, le Grand livre du mois, Paris, 1994. ●*Suffren, héros de l'Inde*, Gustave-Joseph -Henri Landrieu [anagr. G. de Raulin], Edition J. Susse, Paris, 1944.

Naval battle of Trincomalee.

Other name: *Bataille-de-la-Gueule-de-Bois*. [Battle of the Hangover.]

Date of action: 3rd-6th September 1782.

Location: City on the coast of the Bay of Bengal; Sri Lanka. Now called Trinquemalay or Trincomalee. Geographical coordinates: 08°57' North & 81°24' East.

Conflict: American Revolution [5th September 1775-3rd September 1783, Treaty of Paris and Versailles]. Theatre of operations in the Far-East.

Military Forces involved

Battle of the Hangover-Bataille de la Gueule de Bois	
ROYAL NAVY	MARINE ROYALE
1-The EXETER 64, Captain King 2-The ISIS 50, Captain Lumley 3-The HERO 74, Captain Hawker 4-The SCEPTRE 64, Captain Graves 5-The BURFORD 64, Captain Rainier, 6-The SULTAN 74, Captain Walt 7-The SUPERBE 74, Admiral Hugues 8-The MONARCA 74, Captain Gell 9-The EAGLE 64, Captain Reddal 10-The MAGNANIME 64, Mackensie 11-The MONMOUTH 64, Captain Alms 12-The WORCESTER 64, Captain Hugues 13-The SAN-CARLOS 44, 14-The ACTIVE 40, Frigates: The MEDEA 28, The COVENTRY 28, The SEAHORSE 24, The COMBUSTION 10 fireship.	VAN 1-L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Captain St-Félix, 2-Le SÉVÈRE 64, Maurville de Langle 3-Le St-MICHEL 60, Capt. Aymar 4-L'ORIENT 74, Captain de La Pallière 5-Le BRILLANT 64, Capt. de Kersauson 6-La FORTUNE 10 sloop, Capt. Lusignan CENTRE 7-Le PETIT-ANNIBAL 50, Morard de Galles 8-Le SPHINX 64, Captain du Chilleau 9-Le HÉROS 74, Suffren 10-L'ILLUSTRE 74, Capt. Bruyères 11-Le FLAMAND 54, Périer de Salvert REAR 12-L'AJAX 64, Capt. Beaumont 13-Le GRAND-ANNIBAL 74, Boudin Tromelin 14-Le VENGEUR, 64, Capt. Cuverville 15-Le BIZARRE 64, Landelle-Roscanvec Frigates : BELLONE 32, CONSOLANTE

Context: The English port of Trinquemalee, besieged by the French, had just surrendered. Sir Edgard Hughes with his relief

squadron arrived with some delay, too late to break the blockade.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Sir Edgard Hughes. ●*Marine Royale*: le bailli de Suffren de Saint-Tropez, Vice-Admiral.

Strategy or tactics: This victory was useless for the French who, after the surrender of Trincomalee, could have remained under the protection of the forts. But, in a spirit of contradiction to a group of officers[112] who were of the opinion not to give battle unnecessarily, Suffren ordered to sail and to combat. Again, Boudin de Tromelin continued to sabotage the orders of his commander-in-chief. But this time he was punished.

Summary of the action: The English fleet appeared and broke down 40 km off Trincomalee. Suffren and the French had celebrated[113] the fall of this stronghold a little too much. Immediately, Suffren sent a frigate, La BELLONE, to keep an eye on the enemy while the French squadron set sail. This was the "*Battle of the Hangover*". Very confused. Disadvantaged by the wind coming from the East and by the proximity of the coast, Suffren tried to regroup his squadron and, by complex maneuvers, to join against the wind the English squadron which was cruising off the coast, to the wind of the French. Instead of approaching to give battle as quickly as possible, the English squadron observed these maneuvers from a distance, with circumspection.

In the greatest confusion, the French squadron finally managed to form three divisions in front of the English line. Only the central division, commanded by Suffren, had sufficient wind. At about 15:00, the English were not moving and Suffren, furious, fired a cannon to give the signal for battle. The French Admiral tried to correct the situation by ordering his

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[112] ●Which included Boudin de Tromelin, the leader of the mutineers. The latter sought to sabotage Suffren's orders, of which he was jealous, assured of the protection of his powerful family. Finally, Boudin de Tromelin was just permanently disbarred from the Marine Royale when he should have been hanged like a thug.

[113] With the English garrison of Trinquemalee, which the French had invited.

vanguard back into line, but this group, caught up in the calm, failed to carry out the order effectively. Some of the boats were shot by their own boats. In the rear guard, the confusion was identical. Suffren ordered Le VENGEUR 64 and the small frigate La CONSOLANTE to get past the English in order to catch them in a pincer movement. But Hugues guessed the maneuver and the English rearguard concentrated all its artillery on Le VENGEUR, which ignited its stern and mizzenmast. The cannons of this latter ship were firing from all the embrasures. But the group of conspirators and the other units of the French rearguard also moved away, soon followed by Le VENGEUR itself, which had prematurely emptied its ammunition bunkers, which were probably incomplete at the start of the action.

These maneuvers made Suffren, who was fighting in the Centre, believe that his rear-guard was deliberately abandoning him. He ordered a tack (a half-turn) to accompany the enemy. But the sails of Le HÉROS and L'ILLUSTRE were not in good condition, and these two warships soon found themselves alone against the English. The AJAX joined them to help. The ships of both squadrons were already savagely ravaged.

Seeing the English vanguard making a mass attack on the three French ships, L'ARTÉSIEN threw itself upon them to stop them. The mainmast of Le HÉROS caught fire and had to be shot down, but without stopping the cannonade. Then L'AJAX lost her mizzen mast and swung. Le HÉROS 74 had to simultaneously face The SUPERBE[114] 74, The MONMOUTH 64, The BURFORD 74, The WORCESTER 64 and The EAGLE 64.: 340 cannons. Suffren fought with the courage of the desperate. Suddenly his mizzenmast fell with a big-bang, dragging the French flag into the sea. Pretending to believe that the French were surrendering, the English shouted a great "Hurrah!", which only enraged Suffren: "*Cover my ship with flags!*", he shouted, swearing like hell, as was his habit. Immediately, the crew hoisted up everything they could lay their hands on, in the way

[114] ●The SUPERBE was spelled with a final **e** in the pages of the great 19th-century English historian Clowes.

of cloths, sheets and tablecloths. The cheering ceased and the English cannonballs rained at the rigging. The crossfire of the five English guns swept across the deck of Le HÉROS and turned it into carnage. Le HÉROS was about to die under the blows when the other French ships, which had been unable to take part in the battle because of the lack of wind and the unwillingness of Tromelin, finally arrived on the battlefield. The English admiral immediately gave the order to break off the combat and sail north, abandoning the battlefield to the French; he conceded them victory.

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Royale*: 398 men and 18 officers killed or wounded. According to Charles Cunat[115]: 82 killed, 255 wounded. ●*Royal Navy*: According to Cunat: 51 killed and 285 wounded.

Consequence of this English defeat: The English were feeling the winds of defeat in the East Indies when the signing of the *Peace of Versailles*[116] saved the compromised British situation. The French squadron broke down at the scene of the battle in case the British came back. The next day, the horizon being empty, the Royal Navy sailed towards Trinquemalee. The ship commanders La-Landelle, Boudin de Tromelin, De Saint-Félix and De Galles were dismissed from their command and sent back to the Isle de France[117] for bad conduct in battle and insubordination. Such conduct ten years later, when their powerful and privileged families could no longer protect them from the wrath of the Revolution, would lead to their being guillotined for treason.

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[115] ●*Histoire du Bailli de Suffren*, Charles Cunat, A.Marteville et Lefas, Rennes, 1852. P.447.

[116] ●Also called the *Peace of Paris*, since it was signed in both places.

[117] ●[Mauritius]. In the Royal Navy, they would have been Court Martialed and shot.

Bescherelle-aîné, Éditions Ardant, Limoges, 1873. ●Hier Suffien, Raymond d'Unienville, Port-Louis [Mauritius], 1979. ●Suffren in the Indian Ocean, Claude Des Presles, Éditions Economies, Paris, 1999. ●Suffren, l'Amiral Satan, Frédéric Hulot, Imp. SEPC, le Grand livre du mois, Paris, 1994. ●Suffren, héros de l'Inde, Gustave Joseph Henri Landrieu [anagr. G. de Raulîn], Édition]. Susse, Paris, 1944.

Naval Battle of Gondelour.

Date of Action: 18 juin 1783.

Location: Coastal city of India. *Cuddalore* or even Kadalùr, port of Carnate located south of Pondicherry. Geographic coordinates: 11° 45' north latitude and 79°45' east longitude.

Conflict: American War of Independence also called American Revolution [September 5th, 1775 - September 3rd, 1783, Treaty of Paris and Versailles].

Background: On 17th June, the French Indian Ocean squadron appeared off Gondelour where Bussy was besieged by the British. The Peace Preliminaries had been signed between France and the United States, on the one hand, and England, on the other, to bring an end to the War of Independence, but the news, that the British Army in America was about to capitulate, was not leaked by the Madras BEIC, [who hoped for a French capitulation in Gondelour. The final signatures of peace were exchanged at Versailles on September 3rd, 1783. Manchester signed for England, Vergennes for France. "England had feared that France would make claims that would humiliate him. Vergennes had replied to this that France's design was not to humiliate its neighbour but to negotiate a general peace in accordance with its national honour[118].»

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[118] ● Comments recorded by the American philosopher Franklin in his diary [he took part in the Negotiations] and quoted by the Duc de Castries in *La France et l'indépendance américaine,* Librairie académique Perrin, Paris. In 1975, In fact, France did not demand anything from England. It did not even attempt to recover the colonies taken by that country during the Seven Years' War, which had ended only ten years earlier, in 1763. When we know that France could have demanded that Acadia or Canada be restored to her, England, defeated and alone for once before France, would have been forced to submit to the demand. But one wonders whether the French-Canadian people would have agreed to rally in defiance of the interdict of the Canadian Catholic Church, which had refused any collaboration with the invading American troops out of distrust of this impious nation that risked drowning it in its Protestant American union [of nearly three million inhabitants, while Canada had only 75,000 Catholics]. In fact, seeing the danger, London had hastened to buy the cooperation of the Catholic Church, which, in

Military Leaders in command ●*Marine Royale*: Le Bailli de Suffren. He received an express order from the Court of Versailles not to endanger his life as he was used to do. So, he transferred his mark to little CLÉOPÂTRE, whereas until then, his flagship was Le HÉRO. ●Royal Navy: Admiral Hughes.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Royale*: 14 ships carrying 978 guns[119]. On the 74-gun ships, the crews were reduced to 500 men instead of 740. Five ships of 74 guns, 8 of 64 and 2 of 50. ●*Royal Navy*: 18 warships with 1286 guns, including 1 ship of 80 guns, 7 of 74, 7 of 64 and 1 of 52.

Strategy or tactics: Traditional double parallel files. There was no assault by direct boarding, despite the numerical superiority of the English. The danger for the French was that the more numerous English would take Suffren's tactic of using the outnumbered ships to envelop the rearguard and take it in a pincer movement.

In the French camp there was mistrust. When Bussy addressed Suffren, to politely "beg" him to come to his aid, the latter, suspicious, thought he detected a trap in his sentences[120] which seemed deferential, but which could become, in fact, a means of relieving himself of all responsibility; for it was necessary to risk the French squadron against a numerically superior English squadron. The squadron was the only way to remain in India for the French. So, it was a veritable roll of the dice. But Suffren accepted and fought the naval battle known as Gondelour. This mistrust among the French leaders did not facilitate adequate decision-making.

It is necessary here to mention the brilliant maneuver that allowed Suffren to get rid of the English fleet in order to rescue (besieged) Gondelour. On 11th June, the French

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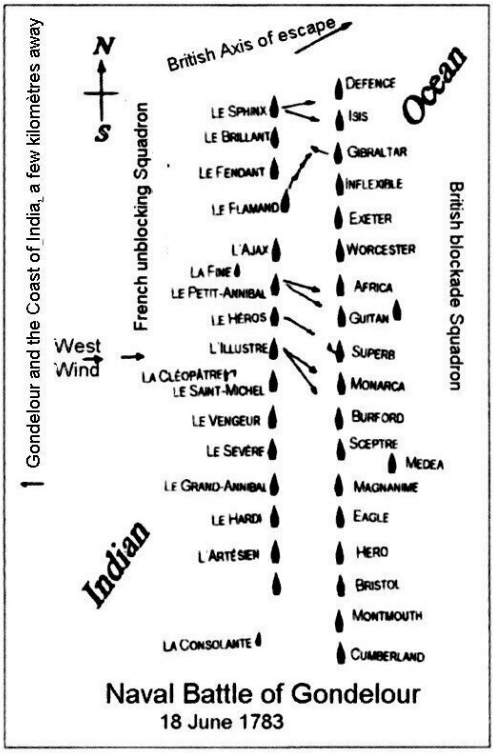
turn, had threatened to excommunicate French Canadians who took up the Americans' cause.

[119] ●But eight of them were not copper-doubled.

[120] ●De Bussy insisted on the fact that the admiral was totally free in his decision.

squadron [15 ships of the line, 3 frigates and a fireship] arrived from its base at Trinquemalee.

For lack of sailors, all the other frigates had been disarmed and their crews distributed among the vessels. In addition, sepoys and lascars had reinforced the crews. *Despite this, the French crews had only three-quarters of full staff.* Some ships had waterways. It was in this situation of material inferiority that the French squadron[121] set itself in motion in order to face the English which consisted of 18 ships of the line, all in perfect condition after being repaired at Bombay[122].



Naval Battle of Gondelour
18 June 1783

On 13th June, the French were in sight of the English squadron anchored north of Porto Novo to support Stuart's land operations.

At the sight of the Marine Royale squadron, Hugh rightly considered that the essential objective of the campaign was the capture of Gondelour. Consequently, he moved his ships a little further north, in front of this stronghold. On the 14th, the French

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121 ●Fifteen ships of the line.

122 ●Roux, Le Bailli de Suffren dans l'Inde, p. 192-193. Bombay was renamed Mumbai at the end of the twentieth century.

ships approached closer and deployed in line of battle to provoke the Royal Navy.

He himself moved his quarters aboard the frigate La CLÉOPÂTRE[123]. Suffren wanted to engage immediately in the fight in order to unblock the seafront of Gondelour, but the contrary winds prevented him from approaching the English who anchored in front of the besieged city, unwilling a hazardous battle.

On June 16th, finally, the winds changed and the French were able to rush to the attack. Hugh, having been compelled to accept the challenge and desiring to obtain the advantage of the wind for his ships[124], hoisted his sails and headed for the high seas. But he realized that the winds did not favor his maneuvers. *In addition, the French dived straight at Gondelour, towards the same anchorage that the Royal Navy had just abandoned*[125]. Suffren's audacity and courage had just won a great victory without firing a single cannon shot. He was able to supply Gondelour, complete his crew with the soldiers of the garrison and demoralize the besieging English army[126]", Bussy, commander of the French garrison, had been warned and held ready boats of 15 to 20 metres in length, full of artillerymen and sepoys. Suffren knew well that of the two English forces besieging Gondelour, he had to attack the English squadron first, for if he had landed troops to attack the army first, his squadron would have been dangerously exposed to the blows of the Royal Navy.

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[123] ●Following the capture of the Comte de Grasse in American waters, a royal order obliged the squadron leaders of the Marine Royale to stay away from the line of battle, much to Suffren's frustration.

[124] ●At least that's the explanation he gave for his sudden dropout.

[125] ●This trick had been played at Admiral de Grasse by the English Admiral Hood, a year earlier, in front of the island of St. Christopher, on January 25th, 1782 [*see above*].

[126] ●"Thus, advance by roundabout ways and distract the enemy by baiting. Thanks to this process, it may be that, gone after him, you arrive before. Who is able to do so includes the strategy of direct and indirect." Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, chap. VII [Manoeuvre], Principle 3, p. 142-143- Ts'aoTs'ao adds in echo: "The specialist will laugh at the maneuvers; for the one who is not [specialist], it is dangerous."

MARINE ROYALE	ROYAL NAVY
1●Le SPHINX 64, Capt du Chilleau	1●The DEFENCE 74, Capt Newnham
2●Le BRILLANT 64, Capt Kersozon	2●The ISIS 50, Capt Holladay
3●Le FENDANT 74, Capt Peynier	3●The GIBRALTAR 82, Adm Bikerton
4●Le FLAMAND 50, Capt Salvert	4●The INFLEXIBLE 64, Capt Chewind
5●L'AJAX 64, Capt Mancellière	5●The EXETER 64, Capt Smith
6●Le PETIT-ANNIBAL 50, Capt Du Pas	6●The WORCESTER 64, Capt Hugues
7●Le HÉROS 74, Capt Moissac	7●The AFRICA 64, Capt Macdonnel
8●L'ILLUSTRE 74, Capt Bruyères	8●The SULTAN 74, Capt Mitchell
9●Le ST-MICHEL 60, Capt Beaumont	9●The SUPERB 74, Capt Hugues
10●Le VENGEUR 64, Capt Cuverville	10●The MONARCH 70, Capt Gell
11●Le SÉVÈRE 64, Capt de Langle	11●The BURFORD 70, Capt Reiner
12●Le GND-ANNIBAL 74, Capt Aymar	12●The SCEPTRE 64, Capt Graves
13●Le HARDI 64, Capt Kerhue	13●The MAGNANIME 64, Capt McKenzie
14●L'ARTÉSIEN 64, Capt de Vignes	14●The EAGLE 64, Capt Clarke
	15●The HERO 74, Capt King
	16●The BRISTOL 50, Capt Rumey
	17●The MONTMOUTH 64, Capt Alms
	18●The CUMBERLAND 74 Capt Allen
2 Frigates.	1 frigate.
TOTAL: 14 ships of the line	**TOTAL: 18 ships of the line**

He therefore had to reinforce his crews, defeat the English squadron and then land reinforcements to beat the land besiegers.

Despite a certain mistrust, the correspondence between Suffren and Bussy shows a perfect agreement at least as to this tactic: the fortifications of Gondelour did not allow to resist indefinitely to an army too numerous, it was first necessary to eliminate the English squadron and then embark the wounded, thus freeing the hands of the garrison which could launch a general sortie against the rear of the English army and inflict a defeat on him. Reinforcements[127] embarked on the 18th.

Summary of action: The sun was going down when the white flag of the Marine Royale squadron appeared off Gondelour blocked by the British army, on land, and by the Royal Navy, at sea. Suffren decided to first supplement his crews with French

[127] ●Six hundred European artillerymen and 600 sepoys.

gunners taken from the garrison of Gondelour and by sepoys from the same garrison. Unable to approach the English squadron of 18 ships anchored in front of Gondelour, Suffren stayed on the spot during the night of 18th to 19th June, the wind having changed and the English having sailed out to sea to give battle to the French, Suffren approached Gondelour and embarked 600 artillerymen and 600 sepoys.

It was necessary to keep this information very secret, because the English army would not have failed to attack Gondelour if it had known that the French garrison was thus weakened.

The next morning, Suffren offered the fight to the English. But the cunning Admiral Hugh declined, wanting to attract the French even further from Gondelour and above all, despite his numerical superiority, wishing to engage the battle in the last hours of the day in order to be able to break the fight and stall in favor of the night in case of difficulties. Suffren had a break to train his 1,200 gunners and sepoys in naval combat.

On the morning of June 20th, finally, after a day and a night of waiting, the wind was to the advantage of the French [west wind] who rushed towards the English. They reached them in the evening and offered them battle. The English admiral could no longer refuse the fight without losing face. So, he accepted it. Aboard La CLÉOPÂTRE, outside the French line, Suffren traveled the battlefield to tidy up his ships. Le SPHINX faced two Englishmen including The ISIS, which gave him only 64 guns against 148. To take his place in the French line, Le FLAMAND came to "draw" an arabesque in the wave and a hip play under the nose of the English squadron which greeted him, not with a tornado of applause, but a hurricane of fire and cannonballs... which killed Salvert, its captain. Trublet took command. The cannonade was now raging. The fire broke out in the mizzen span of Le FENDANT, where the ship's grenade reserve exploded, while the English bombarded it incessantly. Suddenly, Le FLAMAND came to intervene, in between, to give Le FENDANT time to move away and extinguish its fires.

Then, The GIBRALTAR[128] came out of the English line to come and fill the void left by Le FENDANT. Carried away by his exacerbated patriotism, Thomas Hicks, The GIBRALTAR's captain, had recklessly bet that he would bring back a French ship from his first sea battle. He had boasted of it a little loudly and, to the delight of his subordinates, fate was going to take care of humiliating him. Le FLAMAND reduced its sail to catch up and The GIBRALTAR, which was replenishing its guns, received a full murderous broadside at close range which stuffed its flanks with cast iron. Captain Hicks maneuvered back to the English lime under the mocking sneers of other English sailors. Not only had he lost his bet, but he had, with his 82 guns, retreated before the 64 guns of Le FLAMAND. Le PET1T-ANNIBAL[129], like L'AJAX, had the same name as two English ships. L'ILLUSTRE also fought against two English ships, while a quarter of its crew had to pump to prevent this ship from sinking. All the line was ablaze. The battle began at 3:30 p.m. And little by little, the English ships took a defensive attitude because of their numerical and material superiority in artillery which allowed them to fight *from afar* without deadly boardings.

Shortly before nightfall, the Royal Navy squadron began to pull away. They walked away imperceptibly, pursued by the French. The large English ships did not directly present the stern, but obliquated their sides armes. Two additional hours of daylight would have allowed the French to rally the English fleet, which was able to flee during the night. Suffren[130] tried to stop the pursuit, but the ships pretended not to see his signals in order to prevent the English from cannoning. By daylight, the English had disappeared beyond the horizon. Suffren anchored

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[128] ●Captain Thomas Hicks. The GIBRALTAR 82 was a large and powerful ship taken from the Spanish with great difficulty and bearing the mark of the English admiral Bikerton.

[129] ●An English prize. The French already had an ANNIBAL. They were therefore content to distinguish them by SMALL or LARGE, according to their tonnage.

[130] ●Aboard his frigate La CLÉOPÂTRE.

his squadron so as not to stray too far from Gondelour, which he had to cover and from which he had to be able to return everything to the garrison from which he had borrowed fighters.

At noon, the English squadron was reported in the S.-S.-E. On the 22nd, she was sighted *en route* to the north. At first, Hugh had not seen the French ships whose white colors [the flag] mingled with the coast. The French, offering combat, rushed in line to the English line, but Hugh changed course and hastily stalled. Suffren did not continue, for he had not yet landed the garrison of Gondelour, the English besiegers being able to realize at any moment that they had almost no one left behind the ramparts, in front of them. Moreover, for an additional reason, the English vessels were much newer and more accurate than those of the French and a pursuit would have been futile. Gondelour was unblocked on the maritime side.

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Royale*: the French ship most affected was Le FLAMAND which lost a hundred men including Captain Salvert. ●*Royal Navy*: unknown; probably of the same order.

Consequence of this English defeat: After this victory, Suffren did not pursue Hugh, preferring to return the 1200 soldiers to the garrison of Gondelour besieged by the English. In fact, unlocking Gondelour had been the essential goal of the battle.

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The Betrayal of Toulon.

Date of the action: 18th September-18th December 1793.

Conflict: Civil War in France. French Revolutionary Wars against the whole Europe coalesced by England's gold.

Context: The French Aristocrats and the Marine Royale, entirely commanded by Aristocrats, seized the naval base of Toulon and the city, and invited the English fleet to come and take possession of it on condition that they help them to overthrow the Revolution.

Military Leaders in Command ♦*French*: General-Marquis Carteaux, and Lapoype at the beginning of the siege by the Révolutionnaires. Soon, Carteaux himself was replaced by General Doppet. The latter was replaced in the middle of November by General Jacques Coquille Dugommier. The siege Artillery, commanded by General Du Teil, who was ill, was actually led by Captain Bonaparte. ♦*English*: Admiral Hood commanded the English blockade fleet from his flagship The VICTORY. General O'Hara[1] arrived from Gibraltar and took command of the English Toulon garrison. Admiral Gravina of Spain claimed to command the Allies "in the name of the King of Spain." The future Admiral Nelson was then a non-commissioned officer on the AGAMEMNON. The ship that was to become his flagship and mausoleum, The VICTORY, served as Hood's HQ.

Tactic or Strategy: Betrayal of a social class, followed by a full-scale siege of Toulon by the French Revolutionary Army. The clever tactics of the artillery captain Napoléon Bonaparte, forced the Royal Navy to flee, leaving thousands of royalist families to the guillotine.

[1] ●The same officer who was at Yorktown when the British Army surrendered at the end of the American Revolution.

Military Forces involved:

TREASON OF THE FRENCH REAR-ADMIRAL JEAN-HONORÉ DE TROGOFF DE KERLESSY WHO HANDED THE FRENCH FLEET OVER TO THE BRITISH IN 1793 AT TOULON[2]

FRENCH SHIPS-OF-THE-LINE BURNT BY THE ENGLISH[3]

1-Le TRIOMPHANT 80
2-Le DESTIN 74
3-Le CENTAURE 74
4-Le DUGUAY-TROUIN 74
5-Le HÉROS 74
6-Le LIBERTÉ [ex-DICTATEUR] 74
7-Le SUFFISANT 74
8-Le THÉMISTOCLE 74
9-Le TRICOLORE []ex-LYS]

SHIPS-OF-THE-LINE TAKEN AWAY BY THE ENGLISHS[4]

1-COMMERCE-DE-MARSEILLES 120
2-Le POMPÉE 74
3-Le PUISSANT 74
4-Le SCIPION 74

FRIGATES TAKEN AWAY BY THE ENGLISH

1-L'ARÉTHUSE rebaptisée UNDOUNTED
2-La TOPAZE 40
3-La PERLE Renamed AMETHYST 36
4-L'AURORE 36
5-La LUTINE 36
6-La POULETTE 28
7-La BELETTE 28
8-La PROSÉLYTE 24
9-La MOSELLE 20
10-Le MULET 18
11-La SINCÈRE 18
12-La TARLETON 14

MEN-OF-WAR KEPT BY THE FRENCH REPUBLICANS

1-Le SANS-CULOTTE [ex-DAUPHIN-ROYAI] 120
2-Le TONNANT 80
3-Le VICTOIRE [ex-LANGUEDOC] 80
4-Le ÇA-IRA [ex-COURONNE] 80
5-L'HEUREUX 74
6-Le TIMOLÉON [ex-COMMERCE-DE-BORDEAUX]74
7-Le MERCURE 74
8-Le CONQUÉRANT 74
9-Le BARRAS 74
10-L'ALCIDE 74
11-Le CENSEUR 74

ROYAL NAVY

1-VICTORY 100 v/adm **Hood**
2-BRITANNIA 100
3-WINDSOR CASTLE 98
4-PRINCESS ROYAL 98 v/adm Hotham
5-St-GEORGE 98
6- ALCIDE 74
7-TERRIBLE 74
8-EGMONT 74
9-ROBUST 74
10-COURAGEUX 74
11-BEDFORD 74
12-BERWICK 74
13-CAPTAIN 74
14-FORTITUDE 74
15-LEVIATHAN 74
16-COLOSSUS 74
17-ILLUSTRIOUS 74
18-ARDENT 64
19-DIADEM 64
20-INTREPID 64
21-AGAMEMNON 64, Capt Hora
22-St. ALBANS 64 Capt Vashon
23-ROMNEY 50 Capt Paget
24-AIGLE 36
25-INCONSTANT 36
26-LEDA 36
27-ROMULUS 36
28-ISIS 32
29-JUNO 32
30-AIMABLE 32
31-LOWESTOFT 32
32-MELEAGER 32
33-MERMAID 32
34-AQUILON 32
35-CASTOR 32
36-DIDO 28
37-NEMESIS 28
38-TARTAR 29
39-AMPHITRITE 24

[2] ●Trogoff was, for his crime, condemned to death *in abstentia* by the French Government. He died of illness on Elba Island at the age of 44.
[3] ●Unable to take it with them.
[4] ●And recommissioned in the British Royal Navy.

12-Le GUERRIER 74 13-Le PEUPLE SOUVERAIN 74 [ex-SOUVERAIN] 14-Le GÉNÉREUX 74 15-L'ENTREPRENANT 74 16-Le GASPARIN [ex-APOLLON] 17-Le TRENTE-ET-UN-MAI [ex-ORION] 18-Le PATRIOTE 74	40-BULLDOG 14 41-DOLPHIN 44 Hospital ship 42-GORGON 44 support ship 43-CAMEL 20 support ship 44-FURY 14 45-WEAZEL 12 46-SPEADY 14 47-SCOUT 14, brig 48-ECLAIR 20 49-TISIPHONE 12 50-CONGLAGRATION 14 fire-sh 51-VULCAN 14, fireship

The French naval commander was Rear-Admiral Comte de Trogoff, a royalist. All of his officers were aristocrats also; and a large part of the population of the neighborhood shared their royalist opinion. It was a vast conspiracy of the privileged Nobility who did not want the give up their insane privileges in French society. French Bourgeoisie who planned to replace the Aristocrats in privileges and power, secretly pushed the populace to confiscate power from them. The Revolution had overthrown the King, the Aristocrats wished to overthrow the Revolution to recall the King and reinstate themselves back in power and privileges.

On August 22nd two Aristocrat envoys came off from Marseilles to Hood's flagship, the HMS VICTORY. Their mission was to bribe England (as they had done during the War of the Spanish Succession). *The backchich included almost all of the French War Fleet.* An irresistible bribe for England with the War Port and arsenal of Toulon as a bonus for the British... All these aristocrats were betraying their country, France, just to keep their privileges, just as the French Communists will betray this same country in 1939-1940 by a general strike of the armament factories and arsenals when the Wehrmacht will invade France, because Stalin had signed a Pact of Alliance with Hitler. Poor country, beautiful and sweet France, always betrayed by one of its sons!

All these traitors would have all deserved the guillotine. These envoys represented that Toulon and its inhabitants agreed with their views and would also send off delegates to the VICTORY, though, as subsequently appeared, they had somewhat

overstated the case; the delegates never arrived. But no doubt realizing the immensity of his crime, Trogoff called in sick with an *attack of gout* that was, according to the English sea-historian Clowes, *all diplomatic*. This did not spare him a death sentence.

Hood, on the 27th landed in Toulon 1,500 troops and about 200 seamen and Marines under Captain Elphinstone of the ROBUST to take possession of Fort La Malgue, on the east side... During this time the French Republican Army had approached from the direction of Marseilles; and on August 31st its advance patrol met at Ollioules the English [Captain Elphinstone] and Spanish.

The French Fleet traditionally led by aristocrats, declared itself ready to give themselves to the English, their traditional enemy. The latter were eager to restore monarchy in France for fear that the desire for freedom would contaminate their people. The new ideas were in danger of spreading all over Europe and it was high time to put a stop to them. As soon as the city of Toulon had been handed over to the Anglo-Spaniards, rivalries appeared between the Spanish squadron, whose admiral had received from the King of Spain the official title of Governor of Toulon, and the English, who were counting on taking advantage of the civil war in France to seize the war port and the French fleet for their own account.

Fortunately for the French, the Spanish and the English kept a close eye on each other. Each squadron stalked the other with immense distrust. But to the dismay of English military historians, the Pitt government in London, which at the same time was employing 20,000 men to lay siege to Dunkirk, and shortly afterwards sent 15,000 soldiers to die of tropical diseases and yellow fever in the Caribbean, Pitt, therefore, only sent 2,000 soldiers to occupy this strategic fortress. This *Grand Arsenal de France* miraculously fell into British hands with 60 warships, 30 of which were *of-the-line*. There too, as during the American War of Independence (so sadly remembered by all the subjects of His Gracious Majesty), the London Merchant Lobbies were pulling the ropes of London politicians and using

the English nation's lifeblood in their own selfish interests. London Lobbies had judged that the strategic value of the Grand Arsenal of France was no match for the monetary value of the West Indies slaves who threatened to be won over by the perverse and bizarre French ideas of *liberty* and *equality*, and to take to the fields. The British effort had therefore been directed towards the West Indies. From his flagship, Hood immediately tried to remove the cumbersome Spaniards who wanted to give their opinion on all decisions, and placed his troops in key positions: Captain Elphinstone of the ship ROBUST took command of Fort La Mague [or Lamalgue] which commanded the Grande Rade.

Effectifs engagés ♦*French*: From 7,000 men at the beginning, the besieging French army reached 38,000 men by the middle of December. ♦*Royal Navy* and *Armada española*: about 17,000 soldiers, not counting the city's population who provided a large contingent to the anti-French Allies. 2,000 English soldiers, not counting the crews of the fleet, 7,000 Spaniards and 8,000 others, including Neapolitans, Piedmontese and even 1,600 French *émigrants*. Many ships of the line, including two 120-gun ships, and more than 30 frigates.

Strategy or tactics: This was the first encounter of Napoléon Bonaparte with the English. The future emperor saw at once that the key point of the Allied positions was the *Peninsule du Caire*, which beat both roadsides [la Petite-Rade and la Grande-Rade] and could, therefore force the enemy fleet to flee. The port of Toulon was protected on the maritime side by two rocky peninsulas pointing towards the East. The smaller one [la Péninsule du Caire, as we said], separated the Petite Rade from the Grande Rade and was defended by two artillery forts: the Fort de l'Aiguillette and the Fort-Balaguier. Sir James Vashon[5]

[5] ●Sir James Vashon (1742-1827) of French Huguenot descent served England in the Seven Years' War, the American War of Independence, the Wars of the French Revolution and the Wars of the Napoleonic Empire. He joined the Royal Navy at the age of 13 in 1755. After serving on the aptly named 28-gun frigate REVENGE under the command of Captain Cornwall, he took command of the ALERT in 1781, the EUROPA in 1786 and the FORMIDABLE. Then, he became captain of the vessel

Fort de L'Aiguillette was reinforced by the Fort Mulgrave or Petit-Gibraltar. But the batteries of these forts, badly conceived, could fire on the maritime side only. Also, the English had to build additional batteries strongly entrenched, easy to orientate in all directions. To the north of the city of Toulon stood the immense topographical barrier of Mont Faron . A chain of forts flanked the summit of Mont Faron and blocked the approaches to the port to the east and west.

Summary of the action: The siege was thus established in front of Toulon. Perceiving the importance of the Peninsula of Cairo, from where he could beat both the Petite and Grande Rade, Bonaparte, who commanded the Artillery, built 13 siege batteries on the western front of the roadsteads. Six of them were concentrated on Fort Mulgrave. 5,000 French sailors from the crews of the fleet delivered to the English by the royalist officers, refusing to fight against their fellow citizens, were repatriated under parliamentary flag in four French ships of 74 guns.

The first French attacks, which were extremely fierce, were aimed at to seize the elevations that commanded the port in order to install the artillery batteries.

In total, the French fielded 100 (24 to 44-pound) siege pieces, including 200^{mm} to 300^{mm} mortars. The British response consisted of launching "sorties" to destroy the French batteries before they were in a position to act. All these British "sorties" were repulsed with heavy losses. The British attack on *Les Hauts d'Arénas* turned into a disaster. On November 30th, while Napoléon Bonaparte had a battery erected behind the olive trees, near Fort Malbousquet, General O'Hara, surprised by the fire of this battery called "Batterie de la Convention", made an unannounced sortie with 6,000 men and reached the French Republican posts. The Red-Coats began to engage the cannons, when the French, under the command of Bonaparte, rushed into

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DREADNOUGHT between 1801 and 1802. His courage and determination led to his appointment as Admiral in 1821, but he died in 1827 and is buried in St. Laurence Church in Ludlow. *Vashon Island* near Vancouver (Canada) was named by the explorer George Vancouver, who had been his subordinate in Europe.

a trench that led to this battery, and suddenly fell upon the English, who fled when they saw Dugommier also running in with assault troops. Two-thirds of the British Assault Force were killed or taken prisoner, including the British commander-in-chief O'Hara himself [prisoner].

By mid-December, the French batteries were ready to go into action. On December 14th, all the French batteries began to thunder at the same time: those of *Les Sablettes, Les Républicains-du-Midi, Les Hommes-sans-Peur,* and *Les Chasse-Coquins* opened fire between 400 and 600 meters on the Fort du Petit-Gibraltar. More than 500 meters high and 3 km long from east to west. The "*Coquins*" or "rascals" were not only the English and the Spanish but all the French Royalists and their allies. *Fort-Gibraltar* intended to protect *Les Aiguillette* and *Le Balaguier*. French fire was quickly supported by that of *Les-Moulins, Faubregas, La-Grande-Rade, Les-Jacobins* and *Les-Sans-Culottes*. It continued on the 15th and was intensified on the 16th.

In the churches of Toulon, the civilian French population, terrified, implored God to spare them the torments of the terrible Republican guillotine. But this time, their God would remain on the side of the oppressed, deaf to the fervent prayers of the well-off nobility. At dawn on December 18th, during a storm and after a long 48-hour French bombardment, converging attacks were simultaneously launched by the French on both flanks of the Peninsula of Cairo. Assault units totaling 7,000 soldiers were concentrated at the village of La Seyne. Under a terrible storm, three columns were formed. Two in the front line, the one on the left commanded by Victor; the one on the right under the command of Brûlé. The third was in tactical reserve.

The objective was the English Fort-Mulgrave or Petit-Gibraltar, supported by the forts *Saint-Louis, Saint-Philippe* and *Saint-Charles* held by the Spaniards and the Neapolitans. After two successive unsuccessful attacks, the reserves were sent in, led by Bonaparte himself. A young artillery captain named Muiron, rushed through a doorway at the head of his soldiers, took the position and turned the cannons (they had not had time

to engage before fleeing or dying), towards the English. The Allies, English, Spanish and Neapolitan, not pursued, took their wounded and embarked easily under the protection of Allied frigates and two French ships [of the Royalist party], Le COMMERCE-DE-MARSEILLE [where Admiral Trogoff was] and Le POMPÉE.

The next day, the forts *de L'Aiguillette* and *Le Balaguier* were taken from the English. Bonaparte himself took part in the assault and was bayoneted in the thigh. At the same time, another attack was successfully launched by the French on the forts of *Mont-Faron*, to the north. And a diversionary attack against *Fort-Malbousquet*. The city and the harbors had thus fallen under the blows of the French, who could now bombard any point.

Seeing that the Allied positions would soon become untenable, the English convened a Council of War which decided to evacuate the city [*Dunkirk Syndrome* beforehand]. The French Royalists and Spaniards wanted to fight to the death, but the English announced that they were pulling out, forcing the others to do the same. The English then experienced the agonizing *Darlan Syndrome*: *what to do with the magnificent French squadron, anchored in the Petite-Rade, which the French royalist officers had delivered to them and whose equipment was so well made that it was impossible for them to keep it*. The biggest warships were so well made "that they could be handled like frigates". Why were they not immediately shipped to England? Hood regretted very much that he had not, out of sheer political prudery (and under the critical eye of the Spanish), immediately shipped the whole French fleet to England where they would have been the most extraordinary trophy a nation could have "*conquered*"; and without even fighting! But it was now too late. In a few hours the furious French would irretrievably break through the English lines, and, to complicate the problem, the Spanish admiral claimed a share of the French squadron, and would not have allowed, with his 15 ships of the line and his 7,000 soldiers, the English to appropriate the French catch.

Hood therefore decided to set fire to the French ships before daybreak. This allowed the English to destroy the French fleet and to prevent the Spanish fleet from reinforcing itself; such were the pragmatism and the spite of the English. Sidney Smith, the future defender of Saint-Jean-d'Acre, was ordered to burn the French squadron, a third of the total French fleet. The night was thus transformed into an apocalypse.

♦

All around, the French artillery, setting the sky ablaze with its glow, dominated the port and furiously pounded the allied positions, crushed and annihilated one after the other. In the center, the gigantic flames of the big French ships at anchor that the English were setting on fire successively, illuminating this Shakespearian tableau with end-of-the-world shadows: the end of the *aristocratic world*. The enormous explosions of the ships, which the Spaniards blew up, sometimes damaged the English ships. One of them even totally destroyed a ship of His Majesty's. The French galley's convicts, chained to their oars, watched the incendiaries at work, and tried feverishly, sometimes successfully, to free themselves before being consumed by the horrible flames.

Taking advantage of the indescribable disorder, the English sailors, always pragmatic, soon forbade the Spanish sailors from entering the dockyard and they cynically left the fighting to the Spanish sailors, while they were busy looting the French logistical stores of the Navy and the War rope factories, mast factories, powder magazines... full of fear in the Spaniards, who were determined not to let them do so. In this terrifying spectacle, the royalist population of Toulon, fearing the reprisals of the Convention, had gathered on the quays of the port with their sick, their old people and their children. They implored the English and the Spaniards to let them embark on their ships which were preparing to raise the anchor under the cannonballs of Napoléon Bonaparte's artillery. All the quays were covered with luggage. The *Comité de Salut Public* (Sic!), no more concerned with the *salut* (salvation) than with the *public*, condemned the

population to death. Going from group to group, English officers sent by Admiral Hood, who feared that a riot of terror would endanger the ships of His British Majesty before their departure, tried to calm down the Toulon inhabitants by some lies and captious promises, recommending them to return home because, "even if the Republicans won the victory, the English would still be there to welcome on their ships all those who wanted it; boats would be waiting for them at the quay." But, despite the English promises, no one cared about the tragic fate of the Toulonese; the clandestine flight of the Allies began.

English ships began to sneak out of the Little Harbor. Immediately the news spread like wildfire. Everyone rushed to the docks on the quays, no boats! A desperate panic seized the population. All the more so since the members of the former Republican clubs, hidden like rats in the basements during the siege, came out of their lairs, eager for revenge. Settlements of accounts were perpetrated. Fierce royalists instantly became republicans, and, anxious to distinguish themselves blasphemed against the English and against God, like Saint Peter when the rooster crowed. Like the Jews of Massada, entire families, terrorized by the prospect of the guillotine, threw themselves into the water and drowned in a collective suicide. It was the atmosphere of panic in Berlin in 1945, when the arrival of the Soviets, or in Saigon in 1975 when the communist tanks appeared while the Americans were fleeing, or Afghanistan on August 30, 2021, leaving all their allies in the clutches of the ferocious Taliban

French batteries were now firing on the port of Toulon. The English CONFLAGRATION (so well named) was burning like a pyre. Longboats overloaded with fugitives were capsizing or sinking. When, during the night of December 18th to December 19th, the Republicans entered the city at the heels of the last Spaniards leaving the harbor, they found the city almost deserted. 6,000 Toulonese [out of 30,000] had managed, at a high price, to buy a place on English ships. The English, always motivated by their commercial spirit, sold places on their warships at a high price. Families were scattered on several ships, happy

to escape the guillotine. Hundreds, among those who remained, for lack of money, were executed without mercy by the "political commissioners" who accompanied in campaign the troops of the National Convention, to prevent betrayal.

Losses ♦*French*: James reports that 33 ships of all sizes, from the three-deckers of 120 guns to brigs of 14, were destroyed or carried off; but 25 ships-of-the-line, out of the original 30, were left unharmed, for lack of sailors by the British who, until the last moment, had hoped to appropriate them and had therefore spared them. ♦*English* and *Spanish*: The human losses are no more known than those of the French. The Spaniards on the other hand, suffered quite severe losses as they fought until the last moment with great courage.

Consequence of this treason and siege: The capture of Toulon by the Republican French Army removed the south-east of France from the English and prevented them from fomenting insurrections among the royalist populations. This siege was also the "first stone" for the military and political career of the soldier who was to become Napoléon.

Naval Battle of the First of June.

Other name: Battle of The so-called *Glorious* First of June. Battle of Prairial.

Date of the action: 28th May – 1st June 1794.

Location: 600 km west of Ushant. Geographical coordinates of the battlefield: 48º 00' North latitude and 13' 00' West longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the French Revolution [1793-1804], First Coalition against France, 1774-1797.

Context: The National Convention had asked Villaret-Joyeuse, in 1794, to escort an eagerly awaited convoy of wheat from America to save France from famine after a catastrophic harvest caused as much by bad weather as by the civil war[6]. *One hundred and seventeen merchant ships* had left Chesapeake Bay on April 2nd, 1794, escorted by only two small vessels of Rear-Admiral Vanstabel, two frigates and a brig.

From Rochefort, Rear-Admiral Nielly went to meet them on 6 May with five warships. Another larger squadron left Brest under the command of Rear-Admiral Villaret de Joyeuse, a naval captain promoted to Rear-Admiral by the Conventionals. A Commissaire-du-Peuple [Political Commissaire] kept a close eye on him aboard La MONTAGNE [120 guns][7].

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Lord-Admiral Howe; Admiral Graves; Sir George Bower; Sir Alexander Hood. ●*Marine nationale*: Rear-Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse on La MONTAGNE[8].

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[6] The civil war between the pro-Revolution and the Anti-Revolution.

[7] Since the treason of the aristocratic officers of the French Royal Navy at Toulon (they delivered the French fleet to the English) the Revolutionary Government had them under close surveillance.

[8] ● La MONTAGNE was a flagship *on which flew for the first time the new French tricolour flag* made obligatory in the Navy by the: very recent decree of 20 May 1794.

Military Forces involved ●

Naval Battle of the First of June[9]	
Royal Navy	**Marine Nationale**
1-CAESAR 80, Captain Pye Molloy	1-Le TRAJAN 74, Capt. Dumoutier
2-BELLEROPHON 74, adm Pasley	2-L'ÉOLE 74, Kerlanguen ; Bruir
3-LEVIATHAN 74, Hugh Seymour	3-L'AMERICA 74, pa, Louis l'Héritier
4-RUSSELL 74, Willett Payne	4-Le TÉMÉRAIRE 74, Capt. Morel
5-ROYAL SOVEREIGN 110, Adm. Graves	5-Le TERRIBLE 110, c/adm Bouvet
6-MARLBOROUGH 74, Berkeley	6-L'IMPÉTUEUX 74, Capt. Douville
7-DEFENSE 74, Capt. J.Gambier	7-Le MUCIUS 74, Capt. Larreguy
8-IMPREGNABLE 98, c/adm Blagden	8-Le TOURVILLE 74, Capt. Langlois
9-TREMENDOUS 74, Capt J. Pigott	9-Le GASPARIN7 4, Capt. Tardy
10-BARFLEUR 98, c/adm Bowyer	10-Le CONVENTION 74, Capt. Allary
11-INVINCIBLE 74, Pakemham	11-TRENTE UN MAI 74, Gantheaume
12-CULLODEN 74, Schomberg	12-TYRANNICIDE 74, Capt.d'Ordelin
13-GIBRALTAR 80, Mackenzie	13-Le JUSTE 80, Capt. Blavet
14-QUEEN CHARLOTTE110, Howe	14-Le MONTAGNE 120, adm. Villaret
15-BRUNSWICK 74, Capt.Harvey	15-Le JACOBIN 80, Capt. Gassin
16-VALIANT 74, Capt.Pringle	16-L'ACHILLE 74, Capt.de la Villegris
17-ORION 74, Capt.Duckworth	17-Le VENGEUR du PEUPLE74,Renaudin
18-QUEEN 98, c/adm Gardner	18-Le PATRIOTE 74, Capt. Lucadou
19-RAMILLIES 74, Cap Henry Harvey	19-Le NORTHUMBERLAND 74, Etienne
20-ALFRED 74, Capt.John Bazely	20-L'ENTREPRENANT 74, Le Francq
21-MONTAGU 74, James Montagu	21-Le JEMMAPES 74,Leray Desmartis
22-ROYAL GEORGE 100, v/ad Hood	22-Le NEPTUNE 74, Capt. Tiphaigne
23-MAJESTIC 74, Capt. Ch. Cotton	23-Le PELLETIER 74,Raillard Berrade
24-GLORY 98, Capt. Elphinstone	24-Le RÉPUBLICAIN 110,c/adm Niely
25-THUNDERER 74, Capt. Bertie	25-Le SANS PAREIL 80, Lhéritier, C.
	26-Le SCIPION 80, Dapt. Huguet
	27-RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE 74, Vandonge
	28-L'INDOMPTABLE
Frigates & others PHAETON 38, LATONA 38, LIGER 32...	**Frigates & others** TAMISE 32, PAPILLON, GALATÉE 36, GENTILLE 36.

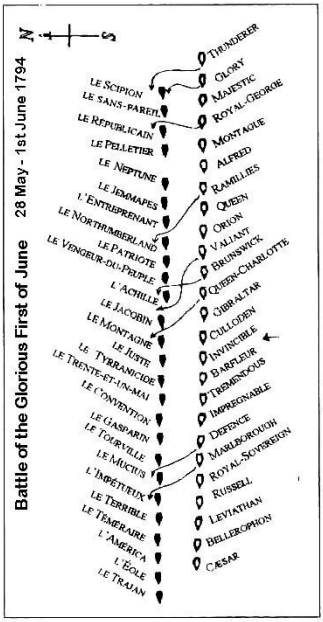
Strategy & tactics: After the betrayal of the royalist cadres of the French Navy at Toulon, the *political commissars*[10] of the Revolution had carefully purged the Navy of its monarchist and Catholic officers, thereby eliminating all experienced officers.

All other French ships still flew the white flag with a tricolour quarter on the upper half of the luff, which had been the regulation since 1791.

[9] ●Source: William laid Clowes.Vol.5 p.226.

[10] ●Then called Commissaires de la Révolution [or of the People]. *Civil War* between Insurgents and Royalists.

Of the 26 French warship commanders directly involved in the protection of this convoy, there was only one experienced naval commander promoted before 1789. But these newly promoted officers were up against two of the world's leading naval powers, England and Holland. But there was one element which helped to strengthen, if necessary, the bravery of the naval officers, at least those whose courage [or republican loyalty] was in doubt: the guillotine.



The political commissars kept a close eye on the ships' officers, who thus became docile executors. Villaret, who knew the position of the French wheat convoy he was to protect, did everything possible to keep the English flee [that didn't know this position] out of the way. So, he discreetly turned his back on the meeting-place area. Lord Admiral Howe, on the other hand, wanted to *neutralize the escorting squadron first*, after which he could either steal or destroy the defenseless supply convoy. Villaret's stubbornness caused him to miss his target: the wheat convoy.

Summary of the action: Day ONE. On 28th May the two squadrons met. By the afternoon of that day, Howe detached a division of six ships, commanded by Rear-Admiral Pasley [The BELLEROPHON, 78 guns], to attack the French rearguard with the closest wind. Seeing this, Villaret sent in support of the small vessels Le RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE [74 guns, Captain Vandongen; ex-BRETAGNE]. The fight started at about 18:00 between Le RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE and The BELLERO-

PHON[11] . After a furious engagement, The BELLEROPHON retreated, but Howe immediately sent 5 English ships to replace this vessel: The RUSSEL [78 guns], The MARLBOROUGH [78] and The THUNDERER [78], then The LEVIATHAN [78] and The AUDACIOUS [78]. Placed to windward, starboard tack, Le RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE could no longer use her low battery from the engaged side[12]. Under the blows of the five English ships, the Frenchman soon lost several masts and found herself leeward of the English, thus unable to manoeuvre effectively. To add to the problems, Vandongen was killed at about 9:30 a.m. As one replacement after another was killed or wounded, it was finally a lieutenant [Dorré] who took command of the warship and continued the fierce battle. The decks of the antagonists were covered with dead and dying men. Finally, despairing of success, Howe broke off the fight and The AUDACIOUS and the other English ships went to Plymouth for repairs while Le RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE managed to reach the Isle of Aix.

This first day ended in a draw. The numbers remained equal and despite their lack of experience, the French officers had shown —under the critical eye of the Political Commissioners— an excellent morale.

Second day. All night long, from the 28th to the 29th, the two ship lines sailed in parallel, the French still to windward, about ten kilometres from each other. The French wheat convoy was arriving and there was no question of Villaret trying to outwit the English fleet which could have destroyed the convoy before it reached France.

At dawn on the 29th, Howe renewed his attacks on the French rearguard. The QUEEN CHARLOTTE [Howe] finally managed to slip in behind the L'ÉOLE[13] and pass to windward

[11] ●The BELLEROPHON was the ship which, 21 years later, took Napoleon into exile to St Helena Island.
[12] ●Because the inclination of the ship obliged to close the gun ports of the lower battery for fear of taking on water.
[13] ●Sixth French ship in line at this time.

of it. A bloody and confused melee ensued, mainly between Le TYRANNICIDE, L'INDOMPTABLE and Le TERRIBLE on the one side and The BELLEROPHON, The LEVIATHAN, The ORION and The BARFLEUR on the other. When the fire stopped at about 17:00, the damage was enormous on both sides. Le TYRANNICIDE and L'INDOMPTABLE, dismasted, were towed from the battlefield. The second battle ended in another draw. However, by the evening of the second day, the French no longer had the wind advantage. During the night, the French escort still sailed parallel to the English squadron, but Villaret had the good tactic of moving away from the area where, the next day, the French convoy formed by the 117 wheat transports from America was to pass. In so doing, he drew the British further away.

Day three. On 30th May, the fog allowed each of the two antagonists to re-form without the other's knowledge. Nielly arrived with three French ships, and a fourth was added during the day, which made up for the dismasting of the previous day, especially as Howe also had six heavily damaged ships. That day the French wheat convoy passed safely over the battlefield of the previous day, from which Villaret had so cleverly drawn the English away. The day passed without a fight.

Fourth day. On the 1st of June the mist finally lifted with a fairly brisk south-easterly wind. The sun was shining. The English squadron, now having the advantage of the wind, threw itself [about 8:00] on the French line. Howe had informed his captains that he intended to cut the French line in the center and that each should attack the other. Most of the English ships remained to windward and those that passed to leeward generally arranged to attack the French ships already engaged to port in reverse. Soon the battlefield was a confused melee obscured by smoke. The English were firing "to sink", below the waterline, while the French were leaning more towards "firing to dismast"[14].

[14] ●Following the now well-established tradition of the two fleets.

It was during this fourth day of 'boarding' that the French ships were most lacking in experienced officers (the aristocrats). Nevertheless, the fighting was fierce in the Centre and in the Rear guard. The French Vanguard took little part in the fighting, despite the urgent signals from Villaret de Joyeuse. This vanguard could not see the reality of the battle because of the thick smoke given off by the naval artillery.

At about noon, the French flagship, Le MONTAGNE, was finally able to break free from its own combat with The QUEEN-CHARLOTTE, which had engaged her from the start. Le MONTAGNE had taken 230 cannonballs in her hull, which were found on her return to Brest; not counting 300 dead and wounded.

By noon, midday, therefore, a dozen French ships, nine of which were completely dismasted, were still in the clash with the English warships. Villaret managed to free five of them, which were taken in tow by corvettes and frigates. Seven others remained prisoners of their enemies. One of them, Le VENGEUR-DU-PEUPLE, soon sank. This ship had been in terrible hand-to-hand combat with The BRUNSWICK. They were bound in a death grip by grappling hooks and anchors as impossible to untangle and untie as the famous Gordian Knot. The BRUNSWICK lost all its masts in the battle and had to be taken in tow by another English. Finally freed, Le VENGEUR-DU-PEUPLE was immediately and mortally shot at by The RAMILLIES and began to sink. Commander Renaudin (from Le VENGEUR-DU-PEUPLE) then brought down his colors in order to save the survivors who were immediately rescued by their English attackers. Despite this, the ship sank into the icy waters of the Atlantic with a hundred wounded men, some of whom disappeared into the waves shouting: "*Vive la France! Vive la République!*"

Six heavily damaged and abandoned French ships were captured by the English. Howe, himself accompanied by eleven English vessels in very poor condition, would have had a hard time to capture them, if the French Political Commissioner Jean

Bon-Saint-André[15] hadn't ordered Villaret de Joyeuse to abandon them immediately and to concern himself only with the safety of the convoy.

On 7th June, the French transport convoy arrived intact in France.

Lord Howe had missed his interception.

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Nationale*: most of the French ships suffered more or less severe damage. Six ships were captured by the British out of 117 wheat transports; one was sunk. ●*Royal Navy*: most of the English ships suffered major damage; for example, The MARLBOROUGH and The DEFENSE were totally dismasted as well as The ROYAL GEORGE. The QUEEN was extremely damaged.

Consequence of the battle: As was only natural, victory was claimed by both nations; by the French who had succeeded in their mission to get the supply convoy through the English blockade, thus avoiding a famine; and by the English who had taken six captures, which caused much excitement in England despite the fact that the Royal Navy's mission [to block the passage of the grain convoy and seize it] had totally failed. Everyone was very pleased; or pretended to be. The British went so far as to officially call the battle *The Glorious First of June* to convince the most hesitant about their success.

Sources & Readings ●The Glorious First of June 1794: a Naval Battle and its Aftermath, Michael Duffy and, Roger Morriss, University of Exeter Press, Exeter, 2001. [Published in association with the National Maritime Museum of Great Britain] ●The Glorious First of June, Oliver Martin Wilson Warner, publication B. T. Batsford, London, 1961. ●Official Documents and Interesting Particulars of the Glorious Victory obtained over the French Fleet, on Sunday, June 1st, 1794, by the British Fleet, under the Command of Admiral Earl Howe, Richard. Earl Howe, publication J. Debrett, London, 1794. ●The Admirals

[15] ●Weird name for a revolutionary, probably anticlerical and even atheist Political Commissioner!

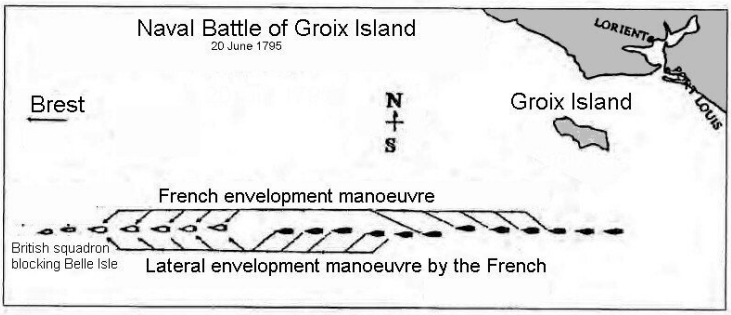
Hood, Dorothy Violet, Publication Hutchinson & Co, London and Melbourne, 1942. ●The Sailors of the Republic. The Avenger and the Rights of Man. The Loire and the Bayonnaise. The Thirteen Prairial. Aboukir and Trafalgar, H. Moulin, Paris, 1882.

Naval Battle of Groix.

Date of action: June 17, 1795.
Location: Island located off Penmarch Point, promontory of the hedge of Audierne in the département of Finisterre, France. Geographic coordinates: 47° 38' North latitude and 03°27' West longitude.
Conflict: French Revolutionary Wars [1793-1804]. The first coalition that began in 1793 and lasted until the Peace of Campo-Formio[16].
Background: Such was the incompetence of those who ran France in maritime matters that this country almost always had a fleet numerically inferior to that of England. Of the 12 ships that France had had so much difficulty equipping, at Brest in 1795, three, under the command of Rear-Admiral Vence, were blocked under Belle-Isle, at the beginning of June 1795, by an English division of 5 ships. Admiral Villaret decided to bring out the nine ships that remained in the harbor to unblock the division. The 9 ships set sail and headed for Belle-Isle; but Rear-Admiral Vence had already left to join the French squadron which was arriving. The 12 French ships headed for Brest.
Military leaders in command ●*Marine Nationale*: Admiral Villaret. ●*Royal Navy*: Vice-Admiral of the Blue Squadron, William Cornwallis.
Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: eight ships including a large three-decks. ●*Marine Nationale*: twelve vessels.
Strategy or Tactics: The French line arrived from the rear and went up from both sides so as to take the English line in pincers. Cornwallis cunningly prevented the French from pursuing him. [He tried]. He signaled that a powerful English squadron was about to appear.

[16] ●On October 17th, 1797.

Summary of the action: On June 16th, 1795, the English squadron, commanded by Vice-*Admiral of the Blue* William Cornwallis, was spotted by the French, The French squadron was itself sighted by an English speedboat, in this case The PHAETON[17]. It immediately warned Cornwallis, who gave the signal for the fight. Soon appeared the 12 French ships-of-the-line. They were downwind of the English squadron. Cornwallis lined



up eight ships of the line[18], two frigates and a 16-gun brig. Immediately, the French squadron threw itself in pursuit of the English and the latter withdrew. The weakness of the wind meant that all day the squadrons did not catch up. The BRUNSWICK 74 and The BELLEROPHON 74 threatened to be caught and intercepted by the French[19]. Cornwallis ordered The MARS [Capitaine Charles Cotton] and The TRIUMPH [Captain Erasmus Gower] to intervene and get between the pursuers and these two ships to cover them. By dawn on the 17th, the French had partially caught up with the fleeing squadron. Around 9:00 a.m., the first French vessel, accompanied by a frigate, finally opened fire on the last Englishman, The MARS. The latter responded

[17] ●Strong frigate of 38 guns, Capt. Robert Stopford.

[18] ●Including a huge tree-deck warship.

[19] ●HMS BELLEROPHON: Seventy-four guns, Captain C. Fitzgerald, later Baron Lecale; As for the Fitzgeralds, of distant Italian origin, they had come to Ireland and translated their name from Gherardini [plural noun to designate the family] into its local equivalent [in reality the Franco-Norman Fils de or Fitz Gérald, The Tuscan branch of the family produced Lisa di Noldo Gherardini, usually known as Mona Lisa or La Joconde, while the Irish branch produced an almost equally famous man, President John Kennedy, a Fitzgerald by his mother Rose [Source; *National Geography Magazine,* November 1974].

with a desperate shot and 30 minutes later, another French ship came to replace the first, arrived at the height of the last fugitive, cannoned it, and so on until 7 p.m., without the other warships of the English squadron turning back to help the unfortunate English.

Finally, Cornwallis, remorseful, decided to stop and come to the aid of The MARS, heavily damaged by successive French fire. The English division was soon surrounded by the French and the cannonade resumed, furious on both sides. Soon, however, the English squadron broke off the fight to flee again towards England. In breaking off, Cornwallis used a ruse to delay the French chase of Admiral Villaret. He reported that a *powerful squadron* was coming to his aid. As night fell, Villaret de Joyeuse decided to wait until the next morning to see what happened with this "powerful squadron".

The next day, Cornwallis' English squadron had drop anchor cautiously under the protection of the coastal batteries of Cawsand Bay at the entrance of Plymouth harbour. The French cruised on the high seas to offer him battle. In vain, the English squadron declined the offer.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: The French division of Rear-Admiral Vence, which was anchored at Belle-Isle, was thus unblocked.

Sources & Readings ●History of the Wars of the French Revolution... Embellished with portraits of the most distinguished characters of the age and illustrated by maps, etc. , Edward Baines, 2 vol., Longman Si Co., London, 1817. ●A History of the Royal Navy, from the earliest times to the wars of the French Revolution, Sir Nicholas Hark Nicolas, G.C.M.G., 2 vols., London, 1847. ●Grande et petites histoires de l'île, Lucien Gourong, Éditions Kedvisual, Merlevenez, 1998.

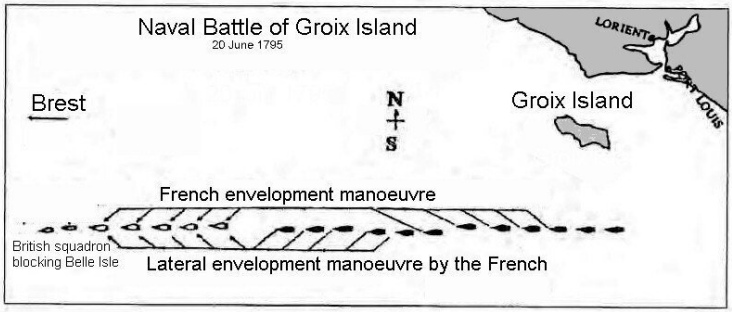
Naval battle of Groix.

Date of the action: 22nd June 1795.

Location: An island located off Penmarch Point, a promontory in the Bay of Audierne in the department of Finisterre. Geographical coordinates: 47° 38' North latitude and 03° 27' West longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the French Revolution [1793-1804]. First coalition that began in 1793 and lasted until the Peace of Campo-Formio, 17 October 1797.

Background: On the same day that "Villaret sailed out of Brest[20], Admiral Bridport had set sail with a squadron of 17 vessels, in order to keep busy the French squadron while Commodore Waren's squadron headed for Quiberon Bay, where they intended, as yet undisclosed, to disembark the French "émigrés", sworn enemies of the Revolution.



At dawn on the 22nd, The NYMPH and The ASTROEA, (two frigates) joined the English Channel squadron commanded by Admiral of-the-White, Alexander Bridport[21]. Lord Bridport had 22 sails carrying 1,454 guns. He had placed his flag on The

[20] ●Guérin, *Histoire Maritime de la France*, vol.6, p.87.
[21] ●Named *Hood* before being knighted.

ROYAL-GEORGE, a huge three-decker of 100 guns[22]. He also had under his command The QUEEN CHARLOTTE[23], 5 ships of 98 guns, The SANS-PAREI[24] of 80 guns, 5 ships of 74 guns, 6 frigates, 2 fireships and a hospital ship [The CHARON]. The enormous vessels of the English squadron were enough to impress Villaret.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral of the White, Lord Alexander Bridport-Hood, ●*Marine nationale*: Admiral Louis Thomas Villaret de Joyeuse.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Nationale*: 12 sails carrying **830** guns. ●*Royal Navy*: 22 sails, large ships carrying **1454** guns. (**624 more guns**)

Strategy or tactics The American strategist Mahan strongly criticized Admiral Bridport and the British Admiralty for the meagre results of this battle when the extremely powerful British squadron could (in his opinion), have captured the whole of the much less powerful French squadron. Mahan wrote: "Such was the extreme circumspection characterizing the early naval operations of the British, until Jervis and Nelson enkindled their service with the relentless energy and spirit inspired by Bonaparte on land. Those to whom St. Vincent and the Nile, Algeciras and Copenhagen, have become history, see with astonishment nine ships of capital importance permitted to escape thus easily from fourteen, forgetting the hold of tradition on the minds of men, and that it's up to genius to open the way for others to follow. How the Admiralty viewed Bridport's action may be inferred from his retaining command of the fleet until April 1800. The ships that reached Lorient had to remain till the winter, when they slipped back two or three at a time to Brest."

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[22] ●The ROYAL GEORGE (100) had a curious fate at Portsmouth. At seven o'clock on the morning of 29 August 1782 work on the hull was carried out, the ship's starboard 50 guns were rolled into the centreline of the ship. This caused the ship to tilt over in the water and sink with crew and visitors (900 in all) 255 only were saved. The crew was kept on board to avoid desertion.

[23] ●A Three-decks of 100 guns, Captain Andrew Snape Douglas,

[24] ● A French prize, of course.

NAVAL COMBAT OFF GROIX, June 23rd, 1795	
Royal Navy	***Marine Nationale***
1-ROYAL GEORGE 100, adm A.Bridport 2-QUEEN CHARLOTTE 100, W.Domett 3-QUEEN 98, v/a A.Gardner 4-LONDON 98, v/a J.Colpoys 5-PRINCE-OF-WALES 98, r/a Harvey 6-PRINCE 98, C. Powell Hamilton 7-BARFLEUR 98, J. Dacres 8-PRINCE GEORGE 98, W. Edge 9-SANS PAREIL 80, r/a H.Seymour 10-VALIANT 74 C. Parker 11-ORION 74, J. Saumarez 12-IRRESISTIBLE 74, R. Grindall 13-RUSSELL 74, T. Larcom 14-COLOSSUS 74, J.Monkton 15-REVOLUTIONNAIRE 44, F.Cole Numerous **(10)** frigates and others including THALIA 36, NYMPHE 36... **TOTAL: 15 big ships of the line carrying 1454 guns.**	1-PEUPLE-SOUVERAIN 120 ou 100 2-L'ALEXANDRE 74, Guillemet 3-Le DROITS DE L'HOMME 74,Sébire 4-Le FORMIDABLE 74, Linois 5-Le FOUGUEUX 74, Giot 6-Le JEAN-BART 74, Legouardon 7-Le MURCIUS 74, Larreguy 8-Le NESTOR 74, 9-Le REDOUTABLE 74, 10-Le TIGRE 80, J.Bedout 11-Le WATTIGNY 74, Donat 12-Le ZÉLÉ 74, A.Magnac Several frigates and others including VIRGINIE 40, FRATERNITÉ, COCARDE 40... **TOTAL: 12 small ships of the line carrying 830 guns.**

Summary of the action: The sea was calm and the wind light. Lord Bridport gave the signal for the attack. The chase lasted all evening, and early in the morning of the 23rd the six leading ships arrived on the jagged Morbihan coast. They were the huge QUEEN -CHARLOTTE carrying Admiral Sir Roger Curtis's flag, The SANS-PAREIL, The COLOSSUS. The IRRESISTIBLE, The ORION and The RUSSELL.

The battle began immediately, filling the quiet, peaceful Breton landscape for three hours with the enormous roll of over 2,000 guns. In the course of the battle, the rest of the English squadron came to the aid of the former. The QUEEN-CHARLOTTE was badly damaged when this ship was caught in the crossfire. After a fierce fight which ended at 9:00 a.m., three French ships were taken by the big English three-deckers of 100 guns.

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine nationale*: three ships taken L'ALEXANDRE, Le FORMIDABLE, Le TIGRE, others damaged. Several hundred killed and wounded. ●*Royal Navy*: ships damaged. Several hundred killed and wounded.

Consequences of this French defeat: This English victory had a very positive psychological effect on the spirit of the English crews after their defeat of 17 June. The military consequences were almost nil. French sailors and soldiers taken from the ships were held in British prisons until their release in 1797. In France, a Commission of Inquiry was appointed and the captains who had not followed the orders of Vice-Admiral Villaret lost their commandment.

Sources & Readings ● The French Wars, 1792-1815, Charles J. Esdaile, Routledge, London, 2001. ● Les guerres de la Révolution, 1792-1797 : de Jemmapes à La Campagne d'Italie, Antoine de Jomini, Hachette littératures, Paris, 1998.

Naval Battle of the Hyères Islands.

Other name: Battle of Fréjus.

Date of action: 15th July 1795.

Location: Mediterranean Coast. Geographic coordinates: latitude 43° 26' N, and Longitude 06° 44' E.

Conflict: The French Revolutionary Wars, 1793-1804. First Coalition that began in 1,793 and lasted until the Peace of Campo-Formio, October 17th, 1797.

Context: The Toulon French Squadron had 17 vessels at this time, thanks to Le BERWICK which had just been taken from the English. At dawn on 13th July, the Squadron was located 20 km south of the Hyères Islands when it received the news according to which the English squadron was in sight. This was the *"Everyone to your battle stations"*!!! [Branlebas de combat!!!]

Military Leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral William Hotham; Rear-Adm. Robert Man; Vice-Adm. Samuel Granston Goodall; Vice-Adm Sir Hyde Parker, and... none other than... Commodore Horatio Nelson. ●*Marine Nationale*: Admiral Martin.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Nationale* : 17 ships of the line and 6 frigates. ●*Royal Navy*: 23 ships of the line, including 5 large three-decks ships and many frigates and corvettes.

British Squadron[25]
1●BRITANNIA 100 - Admiral Hotham, Capt.Holloway;
2●VICTORY 100 - Rear-Adm. Man, Capt.Knight; Heavily engaged
3●PRINCESS-ROYALE 98 - Vice-Adm.Goodall, Capt.Purvis;
4●St. GEORGE 98 - Vice-Adm. Parker, Capt. Foley;
5●WINDSOR CASTLE 98 - Vice-Adm.Lindzee, Capt.Gore;
6●BLENHEIM 90 – Capt.Bazely; Engaged.

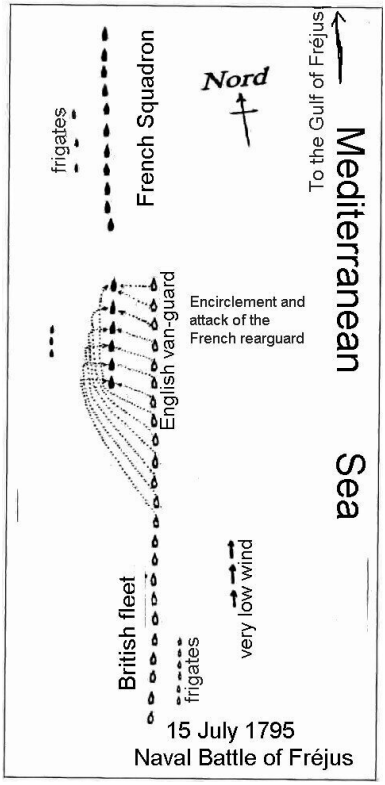
[25] ●*Source* William L. Clowes, The Royal Navy, Vol 4, pp274ff

7●GIBRALTAR 80 — Capt.Pakenham,
8●CAPTAIN 74 — Capt.Reeve Engaged.
9●FORTITUDE 74 — Capt Young;
10●BOMBAY CASTLE — Capt.Chamberlayne;
11●SATURN 74 — Capt.Douglas;
12●CUMBERLAND 74 -Capt.Rowley; Heavily engaged.
13●TERRIBLE 74 — Capt.Campbell;
14●DEFENCE 74 - Capt Wells; Engaged.
15●EGMONT 74 — Capt.Sutton;
16●CULLODEN 74 — Capt.Troubridge; Heavily engaged.
17●BEDFORD 74 — Capt Gould;
18●COURAGEUX 74 — Capt Hallowell;
19●AUDACIOUS 74 — Capt.Shield;
20●GUISCARDO 74 - vaisseau du Royaume de Naples
21●SAMNITO 74 — vaisseau du Royaume de Naples
22●AGAMEMNON 64 — Commodore Horatio Nelson;
23●DIADEM 64 — Capt. Tyler;
Frigates, brigs, cutters ●MELEAGER 32 ●CYCLOPS 28 ●ARIADNE 24 ●COMET 14 ●ECLAIR 20 ●FLECHE 20 ●RESOLUTION (cutter) ●MOSELLE 18 ●MUTINE 12.

Marine Nationale
1●Le SANS-CULOTTE 120, Vice-admiral Martin, Capt.Lapalisse, Commissaire Polit. J. Niou.
2●Le TONNANT 80, Rear-admiral Delmotte, Capt. Cosmao-Kerjulien.
3●Le VICTOIRE 80, Capt. Savary;
4●Le GÉNÉREUX 74, Capt. Louis; Heavily engaged in the battle.
5●L'HEUREUX 74, Capt. Lacaille;
6●Le BARRAS 74, Capt Maureau;
7●Le GUERRIER 74, Capt. Infernet; sent back to Toulon before battle.
8●Le MERCURE 74, Capt. Cattleford; sent back to Toulon before battle.
9●L'ALCIDE 74, Capt. Leblond-StHylaire; heavily engaged, burnt
10●Le TIMOLÉON 74, Capt. Charbonnier;
11●Le DUQUESNE 74, Capt. Allemand;
12●Le PEUPLE-SOUVERAIN 74, Capt. Lindet-Lalonde;
13●Le BERWICK 74, Capt. Dumanoir le Pellet; Heavily engaged
14●Le JEMMAPES 74, Rear-Adm.Renaudin, Capt. Laffon;
15●Le TYRANNICIDE 74, Capt. Dordelin; Heavily engaged.
16●Le JUPITER 74, Capt. Richery;
17●Le RÉVOLUTION 74, Capt. Fay;
18●L'AQUILON 74, Capt. Laterre; Heavily engaged.
19●Le RÉPUBLICAIN 74, Capt. Ganteaume.
Frigates: La JUNON 32; La FRIPONNE 36; L'ALCESTE 32; La SÉRIEUSE 32; La JUSTICE 40; L'EMBUSCADE 40; La FÉLICITÉ; 32; *corvette*: La BRUNE 20; *brigs*: La BADINE 20; L'ALERTE 10; Le HAZARD 18; Le SCOUT 18.

Source : Onésime Troude in Batailles navales de la France.

Strategy or tactics: Parallel lines. The French rearguard could be cut off by the English vanguard because of the lack of the slightest breath of wind, essential to the least maneuver. Strategically speaking, the tension between the two Navies would escalate as far as Trafalgar where the French admiral Villeneuve risked recklessly the bulk of his fleet and that of Spain in one single fight.



Summary of the action: The 19 French ships lined up in the line of battle, under the orders of Admiral Martin. The English also lined up their 23 ships, *including six three-decks*[26], not counting frigates and corvettes. The difference in force between the two squadrons was too great for Martin to give battle, if he had not been cornered. The British would never have fought such a numerically superior squadron. So, Martin did everything he could to avoid the fight, and the English to start it. As the French were downwind (leeward) of the islands of Hyères, there was no question of them seeking refuge on some corner of the coast and to be embossed on it.

Admiral Martin therefore decided on the bay of Fréjus. He signaled to go on the line of battle and running all sails out to this part of the coast. But within three Leagues from the land,

[26] BRITANNIA 100; VICTORY 100; PRINCESS ROYALE 98; St. GEORGE 98; WINDSOR CASTLE 98; BLENHEIM 98.

the wind fell totally. The English vanguard that received still a little breeze could approach the French rearguard, a little in disorder due to lack of wind; just like the English line. The English vanguard took advantage of the last breath of wind to cut off the French rearguard without the rest of the French squadron could think of coming to its aid.

Cannon combat was therefore engaged in the French rearguard with a disadvantage for the latter. But the fire of the French ships was so precise that they inflicted major damage to several English vessels and, in particular, to a large three-decks (The VICTORY 100 guns precisely) whose mainmast they tore down. However, L'ALCIDE 74 was so badly treated that he could not hold his post. The admiral then sent two frigates, La JUSTICE 40 and L'ALCESTE 32 to give L'ALCIDE a tow, because during the fighting, a light wind had resumed. He also sent signals to the neighboring ships, ordering them to come to its rescue when the whole body of L'ALCIDE, masts and sails suddenly burst into flames. The fire was so swift and so violent that the neighboring ships, friends and foe alike, drove away in disaster. No one could help this man-of-war of 74 guns. Thirty minutes later, L'ALCIDE blew up taking part of its crew into nothingness.

After this surprising accident, the battle continued, albeit with weaker intensity between the French rearguard and the English vanguard. Many English vessels had to be taken in tow. In such an extent that the English squadron gave up attacking the French squadron who could continue their journey towards Fréjus and drop anchor in the gulf. The English moved away, leaving the field of battle to the French.

Casualties & Losses ●Heavy damage to both squadrons. The French lost L'ALCIDE, burned and blown up.

Consequence of this battle: The battle was undecided, despite the strong numerical superiority of the English squadron.

Sources & Readings ●*The Royal Navy*, Sir William Laird Clowes, Sampson Low, Marston & Company, London, 1903. 7 Vol. II. ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude,

Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●Mémoires sur la ville et le port de Fréjus, Ch. Texier, Imprimerie royale, Paris, 1847. ●*European and maritime spaces in the eighteenth century*, Guy Richard, Editions du Temps, Paris, 1997. ●*La Destruction de la marine française par la Révolution française*, Joseph Martray, France- Empire, Paris, 1988. ●*Sailors of the Republic and of the Empire*, Raymond Pezan, Vernoy, Geneva, 1979. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843.

Naval battle of Cape Trafalgar.

Date of the action: October 7, 1795.

Location: The battlefield is located west-northwest of Cape St. Vincent. Geographical coordinates approximate 38° North and 7° West.

Conflict: Wars of the French Revolution. The Anti-French First Coalition started in 1793 and lasted until the Peace of Campo-Formio on October 17th, 1797.

Context: After the battles of Groix, six warships were sent from Toulon to Brest: Le VICTOIRE 80, Le BARRAS 74, Le JUPITER 74, Le BERWICK 74, Le RÉVOLUTION 74, Le DUQUESNE 74 and the frigates La FRIPONNE 36, L'EMBUSCADE 40 and La FÉLICITÉ 32. Rear Admiral Richery took command. This squadron set sail on September 14th, 1795, crossed the Mediterranean and passed through the Strait of Gibraltar. It had to fulfill a secret mission before reaching its new assignment: to attack the Convoy du Levant.

Military Leaders in command ●*English*: unknown. ●*French*: Rear-Admiral Richery.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Nationale*: 6 warships and three frigates. ●*Royal Navy*: Levant Convoy, escorted by 3 men-of-war and 6 or 7 frigates.

Strategy or Tactics: As usual, in the event of an attack on a merchant convoy, warships would neutralize the escort and the frigates would capture the transports.

Summary of the action: On October 7th, the French were aware of a large English convoy. It was the *Convoi du Levant*, which was on its way to England after having stopped in Livorno [Tuscany], and then in Gibraltar. Three vessels: The BEDFORD 74, The CENSEUR 74, The FORTITUDE 74 and several frigates escorted it.

French Rear Admiral Richery ordered his ships to attack the warships and frigates escorting the convoy, while at the same time sending the frigates of his squadron to chase the convoy, with orders to take as many merchant ships as they could. The escort was too weak to resist the 6 French warships. Against all odds, the three English warships covered themselves with sails to stall and flee, abandoning the convoy of merchant transports to its sad fate. They soon appeared behind the horizon, but the English ship The CENSEUR, having been caught, surrendered to the French who were attacking it. The group of French frigates, for their part, penetrated the convoy like a pack of wolves in a sheepfold. They brought in 30 merchant ships, all richly loaded. The problem was to bring to port all these ships whose cargoes were so precious that it would have been unfortunate to burn them. France being henceforth at peace with Spain, the French rear-admiral decided consequently to go to Cadiz, of which it was not far away and where he triumphantly entered with the ship-of-the-line which he had captured from the English, followed by the thirty merchant catches.

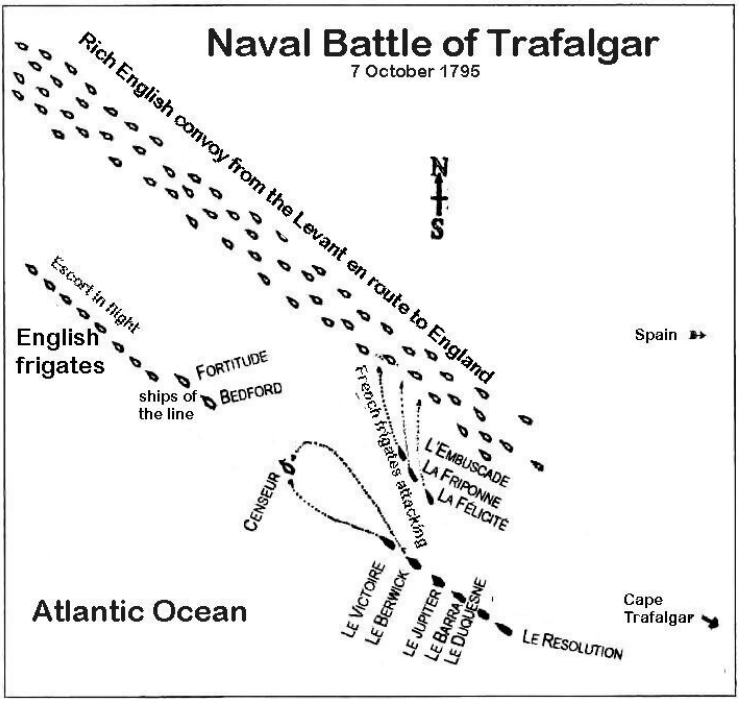
Casualties & Losses ●*English*: thirty merchant transports and one war vessel taken by the French. ●*French*: about ten killed.

Consequence of this English defeat: Overall, the harm inflicted on English commerce was incalculable. While this rich Levantine fleet fell prey to the French, another convoy, that of Jamaica, suffered much the same fate. A French division, which had left the island of Aix at the end of August 1795 under the command of Captain Moultson, had been sent on a cruise to intercept it at the landings. As it approached Europe, a storm dispersed the convoy.

The French took 18 ships and returned to Rochefort. Another division, sailing at the same time [Captain Robin], took 44 ships from the English.

Sources & Readings ●Fleet Battle and Blockade. The French Revolutionary War, 1793-1797, Robert Gardiner, National Maritime Museum, Chatham Publishing Association with The National Maritime Museum, London, 1996, ●A Brief History

of Fighting Ships. David Davies, Robinson Publishings, London, 2002. ●The French Wars, 1792-1815, Charles J. Esdaile, Routledge Publishings, London, 2001.



Naval Battle of Sumatra.

Date of action: September 8th, 1796.

Location: Southeast Asian Island called Sumatera and whose average coordinates are: 00° 05' South, 102° 00' East. Approximate geographical coordinates of the battle area: 03° 30' North latitude and 100° 00' East longitude.

Conflict: French Revolutionary Wars [1793-1804]. Directoire [26th October 1795 or 4 Brumaire year IV – 9th November 1799]. First coalition that began in 1793 and lasted until the Peace of Campo Formio on October 17th, 1797. Indian Ocean Campaign.

Context: As soon as news of the French occupation of the Netherlands [January 1795] reached the Far East in June of the same year, the headquarters of the British East India Company in Bombay and Madras decided to take this opportunity to seize the Dutch colonies in this distant part of the world in order to add them to the economic zone in which the B.E.I.C. had a commercial monopoly, that is, to the British Empire.

Expeditions were immediately organized and dispatched against Ceylon [present-day Sri Lanka] and the Dutch possessions in Malacca. Cape Town [South Africa] surrendered to the English on 26th August 1795, as did Fort Oostenburg. Trincomalee was taken. Batticaloa followed.

The French government decided the following year to send a few light warships to disturb this "splendid monopoly isolation in world trade" now enjoyed by the merchants and shareholders of the British East India Company in this region.

At the head of his frigate division, Admiral Sercey headed for India, made several captures, immediately sent to the island of France (Mauritius), then he continued his way to the Sunda Islands.

On 1st September 1796, the French squadron arrived along the north coast of Sumatra and made new English captures. At dawn on 8th September, the lookout sighted two sails *downwind* of the squadron. They were on their way to the French squadron: two large warships.

At 10:00, Admiral Sercey signaled his frigates to get into line of battle and made signals to which both ships did not respond. At noon, the French flew their flags. The mysterious ships did not show theirs and veered off course. The French then went in pursuit, approached them and identified two large warships of 74 guns[27].

At about 2:30 p.m., the French squadron decided to abandon the pursuit and continue their journey, for even if the six small frigates could, by dint of courage, overcome two large ships of 74 guns, they might suffer damage which would jeopardize the rest of their cruise. That was simple wisdom!

Military Leaders in presence ●*English*: unknown. ●*French*: Admiral Sercey.

Military Forces involved ●English: 2 warships of 74 guns, The ARROGANT and The VICTORIOUS. ●French: six light frigates[28]: 1-La RÉGÉNÉRÉE, 2-La CYBÈLE, 3-La FORTE, 4-La SEINE, 5-La VERTU. 6-The PRUDENT.

Strategy or tactics: The total weight of the balls of a frigate's broadside was only about 136kg, while that of a large warship reached 331kg. This is an enormous disproportion of force to which must be added the difference in the thickness of the walls of the two ships.

The French battle line was held by the four strongest frigates[29]. La PRUDENTE and La RÉGÉNÉRÉE sailed together a little to windward of the battle line, under the command of Captain Magon [who commanded La PRUDENTE]. The mission of

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[27] ●They were: The ARROGANT and The VICTORIOUS.
[28] ●La RÉGÉNÉRÉE, La FORTE, La SEINE, La CYBÈLE, La PRUDENTE et la VERTU.
[29] ●1st La CYBÈLE, 2nd La FORTE, 3rd La SEINE, 4th La VERTU.

this light division was to envelop the large English ships, i.e. to attack them from the rear, in a pincer movement, on both sides.

Summary of the action: Soon, however, the English ships, perhaps regretting that they had missed a good opportunity to gain glory and stripes at little cost, also turned back to attack the French. The English then formed up in line to windward of the frigates, and began to run on the same tack as the frigates, approaching insensibly. By 19:00 they were very close and then, cautious again, changed their minds and moved away as if they wanted to wait for the darkness to attack.

When evening came, the English lit the battle lights in their batteries and kept a large unknown flag at the stern. They hoped perhaps to take advantage of an accidental disorder which the darkness could throw into the French division to attack each vessel in detail.

At 22:00, the sounding had indicated five fathoms[30], the French admiral turned seaward with the *wind up*[31]. The English undoubtedly imitated this move in the secrecy of the night, for the next day, September 9th, they were within gun range of the trailing frigates. The French division forced the sails, imitated by the English.

At 5:30, seeing that the battle was becoming inevitable, the French admiral decided to take the initiative. He tacked and ordered a reverse line of battle, with La VERTU in the lead. In

[30] ●That is 30 feet or a little over 9 m.
[31] ●Wind from the front, standing wind.

this order, he pushed his broadside in such a way as to gain the wind from the English ships. At 6:30, the admiral gave the order to fire. The English ships finally hoisted their national flag, which they had carefully concealed until then. The lead ship engaged in combat at 7:00 am, firing several broadsides at La VERTU [32].

The mast and sails of La VERTU suffered and La SEINE lost many combatants. Then the action became general, although La PRUDENTE and La RÉGÉNÉRÉE could only take a late part, being separated from the English by the French line of battle and the winds being too light to allow any more than a very slow maneuver. Finally, La RÉGÉNÉRÉE directed her fire in between La FORTE and La CYBÈLE. La PRUDENTE managed to fire astern of La CYBÈLE. La VERTU appeared to be badly damaged, one of her yards broken. La RÉGÉNÉRÉE was about to give the tow to La VERTU when the Admiral ordered La RÉGÉNÉRÉE and La PRUDENTE to close in on the English. The wind was now dead calm, and the frigates were no longer steering. La RÉGÉNÉRÉE put a boat in the sea to tow herself and thus arrived, at 9:00, in the main line, astern of the frigate of the admiral. The battle was like little flies around a big hornet.

At this point in the naval battle, the first English vessel appeared to be badly damaged, with a broken yardarm and thick smoke coming out of all sides. There was fire on board and the only English concern was to put it out. All the frigates concentrated their attacks on the trailing ship, which only returned weak fire. She was soon disgorged, riddled with bullets and forced to withdraw.

At 11:00 the artillery fell silent. The two English ships, badly damaged, were dragging themselves along with difficulty. The small French frigates might have been able to overcome them, but they too had suffered a great deal, and the two

[32] ●In fact. La VERTU and La SEINE were alone exposed to English fire for quite a long time, because of the weak wind which softened the maneuvers.

big English ships would have sold their skins dearly, putting the very mission of the frigates in jeopardy.

It was therefore decided to let the English retreat. The French division resumed at normal speed its route of the previous day, formed in two columns.

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: The SEINE had 18 killed, including Captain Latour, and 44 wounded. La FORTE: 6 killed and 17 wounded; La CYBÈLE 4 killed and 13 wounded; La VERTU 9 killed and 15 wounded; La PRUDENTE 3 killed and 9 wounded; La RÉGÉNÉRÉE 2 killed and 6 wounded. In total 42 killed and 104 wounded. ●*English*: losses unknown, probably similar

Consequence of this battle: The French division was able to continue scouring the Far Eastern Seas.

Sources & Readings ●*History of the events of the maritime wars between France and England, from 1778 to 1796,* Yves-Joseph de Kerguelen de Trémarec, impr. de Patris, 1796. ●*Marines à la bataille*, Tome I, Des origines auXVIII^{e} siècle, Paul Chack, Ed. du Gerfaut, Paris, 2001. ● *Les guerres navales françaises, du Moyen âge à la Guerre du Golfe,* Maurice Dupont and Etienne Taillemite, Paris, SPM, 1995.

Battle of the Isle of France.

Autre nom, Combat de la Rivière Noire.

Date of action: 22 October 1796.

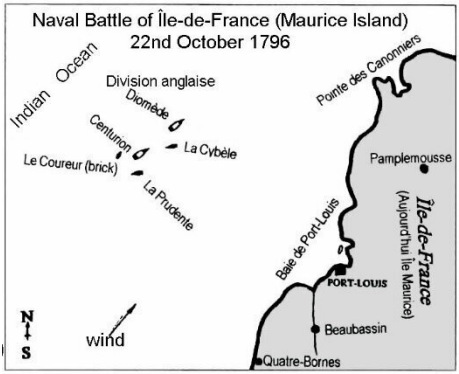
Location: Today Mauritius, in the Indian Ocean. Geographical coordinates: 20° 17' South latitude and 57°33' East longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the French Revolution [1793-1804]. Directoire [from 4 brumaire year IV to 19 brumaire year VIII]. First coalition which started in 1793 and lasted until the Peace of Campo-Formio on 17th October 1797.

Background: The privateers of the Isle of France were ruining the English trade in India. Determined to put an end to this, the government of the British East India Company ordered, towards the end of 1794, the blockade of the island. Two large English ships of the line, The CENTURION and The DIOMEDE 44, came to watch the *Isle de France.* A blockade risked ruining this French colony. Food supplies were already scarce, as the supply ships were running late. The blockade would suspend them indefinitely. Similarly, the return of the French corsairs would become perilous, as they would come upon these large and dangerous warships with their light frigates. The island's notables held a council and decided that the small naval division stationed on the island would go and attack the two big ships. It should cause them enough damage to force them to stay away for a while. Despite the frightening disproportion between the two squadrons in favour of the two big English ships, the intrepid Renaud, commander of the French division, agreed to go and fight the two big ships in the blockade.

Military leaders in command ●*Marine Nationale*: Capt. Renaud. ●*Royal Navy*: Captain Samuel Osborne on the CENTURION 50, and Captain Matthew Smith on the DIOMEDE.

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: two ships of the line, The CENTURION 50 [Capt. Samuel Osborne] and The DIOMEDE 44, [Capt. Matthew Smith]. ●*Marine Nationale*: the French division consisted of only three small ships: two frigates, La PRUDENTE 36 [commodore Jean-Marie Renaud] and La CYBÈLE (Capt. Tréhouart), and a tiny brig, Le COUREUR.



Strategy or tactics: This epic battle was unique in the annals of the navies of both countries. Never before have two frigates voluntarily attacked two large warships and, more importantly, succeeded. The small frigates were, of course, placed across the ships of the line so that the latter could only use a small part of their artillery. As for the brig, it was so small that it had to get as close as possible so that the ships' broadsides would pass over its head, as the English guns[33] could not angle enough to reach it.

Summary of the action: On the 1st Brumaire"[34], the three French ships sailed away to cries of "Vive la France, Vive la République!" At 3:00 p.m., La PRUDENTE was abeam of The CENTURION, and La CYBÈLE was abeam of The DIOMEDE, a bit like David at the feet of Goliath. Then began a terrible battle.

In order to inflict serious damage on the English, the French gunners aimed at the hull below the waterline, the masts, and even the rudder. After an hour of fierce combat against the two giants, and in spite of this skillful tactic, the frigates were

[33] ●Even the low batteries.

[34] ●October 22nd in the so-called republican calendar, which had wanted to remove all traces of Christianity and the past and at the same time "decimalizing' the calendar.

quite badly damaged in their tackle. La PRUDENTE ordered to break off momentarily to regenerate and try to take the wind from the English before returning to the battle. La CYBÈLE, which had suffered greatly in her rigging, tried to obey the order, but was unable to maneuver. She therefore continued to fight alone against the two large English warships. The frigate fought back vigorously, supported by the small brig which only its smallness saved from the English guns whose gun ports were too high. Finally, The CENTURION, dismasted of two of its masts, deprived of its precious rudder and taking water on all sides, deserted the battlefield. La CYBÈLE could then sail away. The DIOMEDE tried to stop him by firing a few broadsides, but he was himself too helpless to give chase. Then, the frigate La PRUDENTE, returning to the fire, joined La CYBELE, gave the latter a tow, and the division returned triumphantly to the harbour to the acclamations of all the inhabitants of the area who covered the shore.

How does Clowes describes this naval combat? "Whilst cruising[35] off Mauritius, The CENTURION 50, and The DIOMEDE 44, saw and chased four [in fact three] French ships[36], La CYBÈLE 40, La PRUDENTE 36, Commodore Jean-Marie Renaud et Le COURRIER 14, which had put to sea with the express purpose of fighting the British squadron[37]. The CENTURION and The DIOMEDE placed themselves opposite the French frigates and opened action at about 3:30 p.m. The CENTURION was soon so much in her rigging that she dropped behind, and La PRUDENTE, leaving the French line, was able to get away from her. La CYBÈLE, passing The CENTURION, brought down the latter's mizen and foretopgallant mast, but, on the wind dropping, was engaged by the powerful British ship, and roughly handled. The DIOMEDE did little or nothing,

[35] ●The two warships were blocking the French port.

[36] ●The English ships were in a fixed position and the French frigates went out of the harbour to attack them in order to unblock the port which was expecting the arrival of French privateers.

[37] ●It is noted that Le JEAN-BART did not come out, did not participate in the fight, despite the mention of Clowes. This makes the victory of the two frigates against two ships-of-the-line even more heroic.

except fire from a distance at the French. Soon after 5:00, the wind again freshened, and La CYBÈLE got away with her maintop-mast gone. Though both British ships pursued her[38] they could not prevent La PRUDENTE from taking her in tow, and with her escaping[39]."

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Nationale*: La CYBÈLE had 22 killed and 62 wounded. La PRUDENTE, 15 killed and 28 wounded. The little COURRIER, one killed and 5 wounded. ●*Royal Navy*: Clowes admits losses of only 27 men, including 3 killes[40].

Consequence of this action: The French objective was achieved, the two English ships of the line had to lift the blockade to go and refit in the East Indies, This gave time for the supplies and privateers to return back home with the provisions, to the great joy of the inhabitants

Captain Smith for his too prudent behaviour was court-martialled and dismissed the service, but the sentence was quashed in 1798. He retired, however, in 1806.

Sources & Readings ●An island and its past: Mauritius, 1507-1947, Antoine Chelin, Mauritius Printing Co, Port Louis, 1973, 1982. ●Mauritius, former Isle-de-France. History and anecdotes, Charles Giblot Ducray, Port Louis, 1965. ●History of Mauritius, former Isle-de-France, Évenor Hitié, Port Louis, 1807. ●La Révolution française et les colonies. Studies published under the direction of Jean Tarrade, Bibliothèque d'histoire d'outre-mer, Société française d'histoire d'outre- mer, Paris, 1989.

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[38] ● No one pursued anyone. Everyone except The DIOMEDE, who had fought little and was not anxious to continue the battle, was in a very bad state to continue. Moreover, the commander of the DIOMEDE was court-martialled in England.

[39] ●Clowes, Vol. 4, p.487."

[40] ●If the number of killed and wounded is an indication of a fighting spirit, this number of killed does not reflect the Royal Navy's traditional fighting spirit.

Battle of the Nile.

Other name: Battle of Aboukir.

Date of action: 1st -3rd August 1798.

Location: The harbor of Aboukir [or Khalij Abu Qir] is located in Egypt, 45 km east of Alexandria. Geographic coordinates: 31°32' north latitude and 30° 08' east longitude.

Conflict: French Revolutionary Wars [1793-1804]. Directoire [26th October 1795 or 4 Brumaire Year IV of the Republic or 9th November 1799 or 19 Brumaire Year VIII]. Egyptian Campaign [1798-1801].

Military Forces involved:

Background: Napoleon Bonaparte was increasingly popular and entrusted with the conquest of Egypt by the French government, which wanted to distance him from France. An armada of 400 transport ships under the command of Admiral Brueys left Toulon on 19th May 1798, took Malta in transit, and anchored at Alexandria on 1st July, while Rear-Admiral Nelson, who was sailing the Mediterranean in all directions, had passed through Alexandria the day before setting sail for Constantinople. Unaware of the strategic value of his squadron, Bonaparte no longer cared about it. But Brueys, instead of returning to Alexandria [as Bonaparte had ordered him], where he feared a stranding, preferred to anchor in the harbor of Aboukir.

Military Leaders ●*Royal Navy*: Rear-Admiral Sir Horacio Nelson. ●*Marine Nationale*: François-Paul Brueys d'Aigalliers, simple lieutenant [de vaisseau] in 1789 and promoted to admiral by the revolutionary government.

Battle of the Nile, August 1st- 3rd, 1798	
MARINE NATIONALE	**ROYAL NAVY**
1-Le GUERRIER 74, ⁂	1-The CULLODEN 74, Trowbridge
2-Le CONQUÉRANT 74, ⁂ *	2-The THESEUS 74, Miller
3-Le SPARTIATE74, ⁂ Emériau	3-The ALEXANDER 74, Alex Bail
4-L'AQUILON 74, ⁂	4-The VANGUARD 74, R/A Nelson
5-Le PEUPLE-SOUVERAIN 74,⁂Racord	5-The MINOTAUR 50, T.Louis
6-Le FRANKLIN 80, ⁂ c/a du Chayla	6-The LEANDER 50, Thompson
7-L'ORIENT120, ⁂ Adm Brueys	7-The SWIFTSURE 74, Hallowell
8-Le TONNANT 80,*⁂ DupetitThouars	8-THE AUDACIOUS 74, Gould
9-L'HEUREUX 74, ⁂	9-THE DEFENSE 74, Peyton
10-Le TIMOLÉON 74,⁂	10-The ZEALOUS 74, Samuel Hood
11-Le MERCURE 74, ⁂	11-The ORION 74, Saumarez
12-Le GUILLAUME-TELL 80,⁂	12-The GOLIATH 74, Foley
13-Le GÉNÉREUX 74,⁂	13-The MAJESTIC 74, Westcott
	14-The BELLEROPHON 74, Darby
	15-The MUTINE [brig]
+ **4 frigates** (c/a Decrès) La DIANE 48, La JUSTICE44, L'ARTÉMISE36, La SÉRIEUSE	+ about **10 frigates.**
CREWs total 5190 men out of 9190	CREWS 8,500 men including frigates.

⁂ The crews of those French warships only numbered 370 out of 600.

***Strategy or tactics*:** Aboukir Bay forms a semicircle that extends from Aboukir Point and the island of the same name, to the mouth of Rosette, the westernmost channel of the Nile Delta. The low coast offered adequate funds for the draught of the ships of the Navy of the Republic [which we call, for simplicity, Marine Nationale] only about 5 km from the coast. The French ships anchored on a line parallel to the coast from the island of Aboukir. For fear of running aground and unaware of

the attack that was to follow[41], Brueys had anchored the beginning of his line, Le GUERRIER, far enough from the island of Aboukir, which allowed the English ships to infiltrate between the coast and the French line and attack it from both sides.

French troop transports had been requisitioned from Italian ports. The escort had been entrusted to the remnants of the Levant Squadron that the English had not had time to burn when Toulon had been delivered to the English by the French Royalists. The French ships were in such poor condition, after the Toulon affair, that part of the artillery had to be landed because of the precarious resistance of decks.

During a Council of War of French admirals, Brueys, who knew that Nelson would find out sooner or later but had never commanded fire, opted for the defensive in this bay since the reduced numbers of French ships did not allow them to maneuver the ship and artillery at the same time. "The ships were in too bad condition and lacked arms," he argued with some reason. On the other hand, Rear-Admiral Blanquet and several other officers preferred to fight on the high seas, despite the lack of sailors. It was of course Brueys who had the last word. Moreover, at anchor, embossed ships had the advantage of fighting only on one side; this would correct the efforts of the numerical insufficiency of the French crews. But Nelson's extremely effective tactics[42] neutralized the French advantage.

The French admiral also installed a light battery on the islet of Aboukir: 5 or 6 small cannons of six, two mortars. This was largely insufficient to prevent the English from crossing the space between this island and the French line in order to bypass the French.

One of the two essential elements of this English victory was surprise. Indeed, nearly half of the French crews had *thoughtlessly* been ordered to disembark to work ashore within

[41] ●This is no excuse for his unforgivable mistake of having his almost unarmed naval units in this deadly hunt.
[42] ●Attack from both sides in pincers.

a fairly large radius. Their mission was to dig wells to supply water, to travel the region to supply the fleet with food.

On the last day, learning that the English squadron was coming, Brueys sent messengers to hastily recall the other half of his crews who scouring the countryside to find food and clear water. 4000 sailors would not be back on the day of the battle and the French ships found themselves with barely enough gunners to put one of the two sides into action. The lack of manpower would have prevented the French from sailing and fighting under sail, even if Brueys had intended to do so. Of all the battle, L'ORIENT could not use its howitzers and the guns of its bowman, having on deck only officers and a few helmsmen[43].

The French admiral also doubled the ships' anchorage points and barred the spaces between the ships with hemp cables to prevent his line of battle from being cut.

Nelson's genius was victorious, as he made the decision, not Captain Foley, one of his officers.

Despite his numerical superiority in naval units and, above all, in manpower, Nelson decided to *multiply this superiority* by attacking *"in pincer*[44]*"* each French ship at anchor with several English ships[45]. He attacked in detail the vanguard and then the French *Corps-de-Bataille*. He knew that because of the

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[43] ●According to Cari von Clausewicz, "Surprise becomes,,, the means to acquire numerical superiority, but, in view of its moral effect, it must also be regarded as an autonomous principle" [De la Guerre chap IX, p.207]

[44] ●From both sides, and even in some cases from stern and bow.

[45] ●The pursuit of numerical superiority is likely the most effective tactic, strongly advocated by Sun Tzu and other military theorists throughout history. Principle 13 of Chapter VI of The Art of War by Sun Tzu explicitly prescribes this: "If I am able to determine the enemy's dispositions while concealing my own, then I can concentrate, and he must disperse. And if I concentrate while he disperses, I can use all my strength to attack a fraction of his. Thus, I will achieve numerical superiority. Therefore, if I can use a large force to strike a small one at a chosen location, those who who oppose me will be pushed to the brink of destruction." The commentator Tu Mu clarifies that stratagems can be employed to achieve this numerical superiority, both locally and temporarily: "In broad daylight, I deceive him with a display of flags and banners. At night, I mislead him with drumbeats. Then, trembling with fear, he will divide his forces as a precautionary measure."

direction of the wind, the other French elements [downwind] could not help them. Thus, he was able to attack each French ship in pincers by more than two to one. The only way to force the English to attack the entire French squadron would have been for the vanguard to cut its cables and drift to the French rearguard[46]. But each ship's crew was too weak to lead the fight and the ship at the same time.

The American military theorist Mahan commented on the behavior of Rear Admiral Villeneuve who commanded the rearguard: "His inaction on this occasion has been abruptly criticized, not only in his time but until now. Overall, the sentiments of French professional writers indicate that his courage, though quite certain, was rather of the passive type; and that in Aboukir Bay he could really have afforded, even considering the weather, to bring the ships of the rear in line; which he was wrong not to do[47]. »

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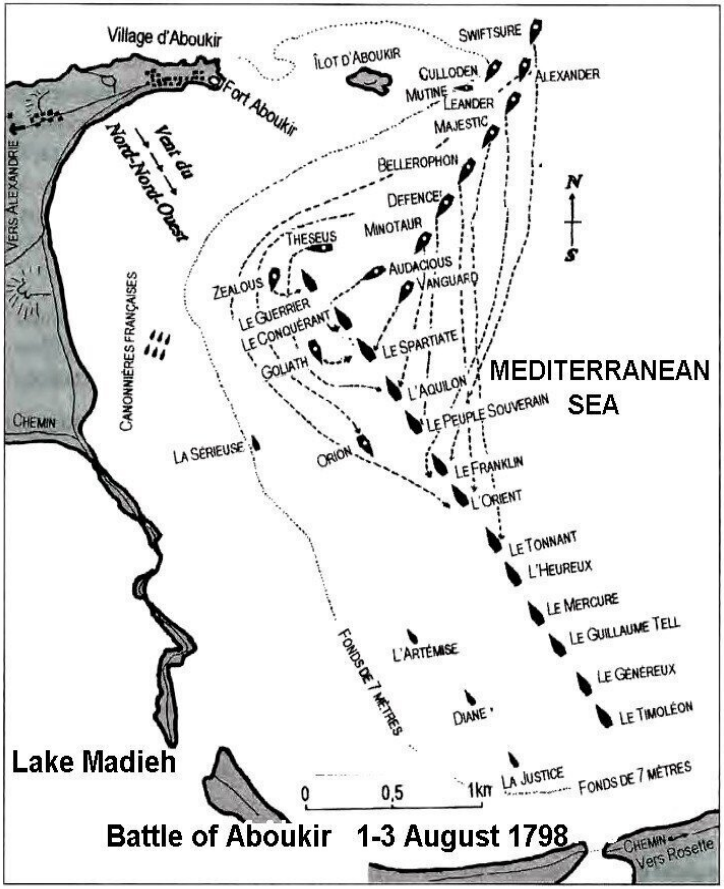
[46] ● Carl von Clausewitz emphasizes the crucial role of numerical superiority in warfare. He underscores this point in Chapter 8 of Book III of *On War* and dedicates an entire chapter—Chapter 3 of Book V—to the topic. Clausewitz asserts, *"If we examine modern military history impartially, it must be recognized that numerical superiority becomes more decisive day by day.''* He explains that in contemporary warfare, armies are so evenly matched in terms of armament, equipment, and training that the differences between the best and the worst are minimal. As a result, numerical superiority plays an even greater role in determining success. Clausewitz states, *"Success due to numerical superiority must be much more certain... One would look in vain in modern military history for an example of a battle where victory was won over an enemy twice as strong, as once happened."* Thus, he argues that commanders must always strive to achieve at least temporary numerical superiority to maximize their chances of victory.

[47] ●Captain A,T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812,* vol. I, p, 272, see *in fine*. Of the battle itself, this Irish-American, whose lack of objectivity is not the least defect, expresses himself as follows: "Such was in its broad outlines, the celebrated Battle of the Nile, the most complete of the naval victories, and among the most decisive, at least in immediate history. During the fighting, the French lost 11 of the 13 ships of the line and 3500 men, killed, wounded or drowned; among them the commander-in-chief and three ship commanders, a rear admiral and six wounded ship commanders...



Battle of Aboukir 1-3 August 1798

Two comments, before moving on to the detailed description of the action. Paradoxically, this victory caused the British to delay their settlement in Egypt. The French army was literally locked in this country, and this did a disservice in a sense to the English military who did not dare to gain a foothold. *Moreover, it seems surprising that fighting two against one, and against almost empty ships, the English took so long to defeat Villeneuve.*

Summary of the Action: After searching for the escort of the French transport fleet, the English squadron finally located it.

The area of anchorage being very little known to English cartographers, The ZEALOUS 74 [Samuel Hood], The GOLIATH 74, The THESEUS and The ORION 74 advanced first to the probe so as not to run aground. They came to pass between the island of Aboukir and Le GUERRIER 74, first of the French line. Less fortunate, The CULLODEN 74 ran aground and remained stuck in a sandbar until the next day. Furious at having to content himself with serving as a beacon to prevent others from getting bogged down, his captain (Trowbridge), unable to participate in the harvest of laurels, witnessed this laborious victory against almost unmanned French ships. Feeling ridiculous in the eyes of all, he did not take off for several days. The guns of too low caliber, placed in battery on the islet of Aboukir, did no harm to the English ships which passed under their noses. Their shots all fell too short, not even splashing their moving targets.

It was 5:30 p.m. Only the first two French ships, Le GUERRIER 74 and Le CONQUÉRANT 74 opened a dense fire on the English vanguard of which they bore all the fire, while the reduced numbers of their crew allowed them only to arm one side out of two. The other French ships, chained to their anchors[48] and in any case downwind, could no longer maneuver.

The four ships of the English vanguard stopped at a good distance from Le GUERRIER and Le CONQUÉRANT in order to retaliate. Soon under the avalanche of iron and fire, the two French ships were reduced to floating pontoons. Le GUERRIER will fight until 21:00 before giving up, when her bridge was literally covered with dead bodies. Le CONQUÉRANT, on the other hand, was knocked out of action more quickly by happier shots on goal.

Meanwhile, the bulk of the English forces were attacking from the east. At first, no one dared to face the formidable 120 guns of the French flagship L'ORIENT, despite its

[48] ●The reduced numbers of crew did not allow to fight on the high seas and to maneuver the sails at the same time.

undermanned crew. Then The BELLEROPHON and The MAJESTIC sacrificed themselves. After a violent exchange of blows, The BELLEROPHON found himself distraught. Unable to maneuver to break off the fight and retreat. He was forced to cut his cables in order to drift away from the guns of L'ORIENT. But the wind blowing from the Northwest, the sad fate, the gloomy Destiny led it drift slowly in front of the murderous batteries of Le TONNANT, L'HEUREUX and Le MERCURE which concentrated all their fire on it, in the hope of finishing this ship [The BELLEROPHON], a real "beating" to the cannon. One after the other, the masts of the BELLEROPHON crashed down, killing many English sailors in their fall. Henry Darby, his captain, then shouted at Le TONNANT that he was capitulating, but the French ships, chained in their cables, could not moor it and catch it. The BELLEROPHON, out of action, continued to drift until he left the fire zone.

The MAJEST1C, which lost its commander in the battle, was itself reduced to the state of floating pontoon by the gunners of L'ORIENT.

Taking advantage of this, The ALEXANDER managed to infiltrate between L'ORIENT and Le TONNANT, came to anchor against the rear quarter of L'ORIENT, unarmed[49], and began to stuff the hull of the French three-deck with its deadly cannonballs. At this point, more than at others, the absence of half the French crews was sorely felt.

Although twice seriously wounded, the French admiral refused to be taken to "safety".

Until then, during the first four hours of the fight, the French rearguard[50], each of whose ship was firmly and unnecessarily anchored to the bottom of the sea by two large anchors, one small and four grelins, had not yet participated in the

[49] ●The rear quarter of the hull is devoid of artillery and therefore poorly defended.
[50] ●This rearguard was the Villeneuve Division. Admiral Villeneuve did not show great initiative during this fight. Naval of Aboukir, no more than seven years later at Trafalgar. We shall see later why he commanded the combined squadron at Trafalgar.

battle[51]. Villeneuve had stubbornly allowed a small number of French ships to support the fight against all the English forces. Moreover, being placed *downwind*[52] in relation to the fight, he could not swerve to go up the wind in the middle of combat. In fact, the only way to force the English to face all the French forces would have been for the French *vanguard* and *center* to cut their cables and drift to *the rearguard*.

This is what Le PEUPLE-SOUVERAIN did, on his own initiative, wishing to come to the aid of L'ORIENT, whose admiral and captain had just been wounded. He drifted to the back hip of the East. But this diversion allowed the LEANDER to infiltrate the niche left free by the PEUPLE-SOUVERAIN and the FRANKLIN was thus surrounded by five English ships which peppered it with cannonballs, at point-blank range. Admiral du Chaylat was wounded and lost consciousness. Soon, only three serviceable artillery pieces remained to retaliate against the hundreds of English cannons.

Night was beginning to fall. Le PEUPLE-SOUVERAIN and Le CONQUÉRANT had finally surrendered. On the other hand, Le SPARTIATE was unleashed against Rear-Admiral Nelson's The VANGUARD. The latter had an eye carried away by a shrapnel, but he bravely resumed his place on his quarter-bench. He directed the entire battle and simultaneously his singular fight against Le SPARTIATE 74, which soon totaled 76 cannonballs below its waterline. He began to embark water on all sides; his powder bunkers were drowned, his parts destroyed one after the other, and any defense became impossible. Captain Émériau then had his flag brought, but Nelson made him return his sword : "*Give him back his sword. He used it too well*," he told the officer who brought him.

Throughout the evening, the French flagship L'ORIENT fought with ardor and despair. Almost all of its crew was *hors-de-combat* [killed or wounded] and its batteries destroyed. Many successive fires, extinguished with great

[51] She had not received any orders from the admiral.
[52] Against the wind,

difficulty, had forced him to drown the powder kegs. Nevertheless, he continued the fight against a multitude of aggressors until 10 p.m., at which time a gigantic explosion came to volatilize him. The explosion caused a fire on two English ships. For a few moments of surprise, the battle stopped. Then it started again. In the dark night lit only by fires, the battle continued between fierce opponents. Nelson had ordered the English ships to light four lanterns on the mast in order to recognize each other and not to cannon each other in so-called *friendly-fire*.

At midnight, exhausted, Le FRANKLIN, reduced to the state of floating pontoon, brought her flag. He had only a handful of able-bodied men left.

Henceforth, only Le TONNANT, also reduced to a state of pontoon, continued the battle. Commander Dupetit-Thouars animated his men from his quarter-bench. He had successively both arms torn off, then a leg, without ceasing to excite the ardor of his crew. Indomitable in the excruciating suffering he endured, he had what was left of his body placed in a barrel of wheat bran in order to continue to stand in an upright position. His last order before expiring was to *nail the flag to a superstructure and sink Le TONNANT rather than surrender*.

At 2:00 in the morning, Le MERCURE and L'HEUREUX, attacked in turn by a pack of English ships, had to throw themselves at the coast so as not to be sunk and to continue the battle until 7:00 am. Two ships took up position, in the meantime, to attack the rearguard division commanded by Villeneuve, which was the only opportunity to battle. At dawn, he managed to save two of his three rearguard ships[53]. As for the frigates of Rear-Admiral Decrès, two managed to escape from the trap.

Le TONNANT continued the fight until the next day, August 3rd. On the evening of the 2nd, Lieutenant Briard, who had

[53] ●Le TIMOLÉON broke her mizzen mast(foremost mast) by trying to set sail, and had to throw herself at the beach where her crew set it on fire so that he would not fall into English hands.

taken command of this bloody wreck, repelled a first summons to surrender. The THESEUS and The LEANDER fought against him all night, but it was not until the next morning that he was finally tucked, and the survivors were able to stop fighting.

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: the toll of this three-day battle was heavy for the French: 11 ships-of-the-line lost out of 13, 1700 killed, 1500 wounded and a thousand prisoners; or 4200 out of 5200 combatants or 81% loss. Obviously, the resistance of the French had been fierce. ●*English*: 1,000 killed and wounded out of 8,500 combatants in total, or 12% of the force. All the ships were badly damaged, but none were lost, except The LEANDER who was captured by Villeneuve when the latter had set sail for Naples to announce to Europe Nelson's victory. According to Clowes, the British gives 218 killed and 678 wounded, which seems extraordinarily low for a fierce three-day battle; total 896.

Consequence of this French defeat: The consequences of the betrayal of the aristocratic officers of the French Fleet in Toulon were still felt. The Battle of the Nile, by destroying the rest of the Mediterranean fleet, blockaded Bonaparte in Egypt. The divisions of Rear-Admirals Villeneuve and Decrès headed for Corfu and then Malta with Le GUILLAUME-TELL, Le GÉNÉREUX, La DIANE and La JUSTICE. On 30th May, 1800, while Le GUILLAUME-TELL [80 guns] was trying to get to Malta, blocked by an English squadron, it was attacked by three English ships: The FOUDROYANT [80 guns], The LION [64 guns] and The PENELOPE [44 guns]. The French ship fought for eight and a half hours, from midnight to 8:30 a.m. on March 31st. Finally, after losing all its masts and defeating its larger English opponents, it was the English frigate that was *the only one* capable of mooring and towing it to Syracuse[54].

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[54] ●Port on the Eastern coast of Sicily, ancient Corinthian colony.

According to Mahan himself[55], credit for this great victory was disputed at Nelson. "It has been discussed to what extent the credit for this powerful maneuver belongs to the admiral; to what extent the lead ship [Captain Foley], which rounded the front of the French line, showed the English line by what means the enemy could be most effectively defeated. In this discussion, the author of these lines [Mahan] does not intend to enter. There was only an omission in the full treatment of the question by the careful and laborious editor of Nelson's Order, Sir Harris Nicolas, who was unable to reach a decision. In Ross' *Life of Admiral Saumarez*, it is noted that, while discussing the different tactics to outwit the enemy, Saumarez offended Nelson by saying that "he had seen the bad consequences of *overtaking* an enemy [i.e. *attacking him from both sides*], especially in a night action " ; and that he had not agreed with the admiral on the plan of attack, because "it had never taken two English ships to seize a Frenchman[56], and that the damage which the two English ships could inflict on each other could make them both unable to cope with an enemy ship which had not been engaged. Saumarez's objection, therefore, although *not unfounded*, was justly rejected; but it could not have been raised if Nelson had not made the precise project of *dubbing an English ship on both sides of each Frenchman* because in no other position the risk of mutual injury would have been serious... In the present case, he [Nelson] could not, without being foolish, have rigorously ordered Captain Foley which way to go, for only the man on the deck of The GOLIATH, in watching the probe, could correctly judge what had to be done at every moment."

The American writer-historian Fenimore Cooper, author of *The Last of the Mohicans*, attributed, in the preface to his work *Two Admirals*, all the benefit of his tactical combination *to the commander Foley*, under the high authority of Captain Bail of The ALEXANDER. He knew this from Commodore Morris of the US Navy who had learned it from English officers.

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[55] ●Mahan, *op. cit.*

[56] ●Canadian Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, who won the Hayes naval victory in Hudson Bay, alone against three English vessels, would say that even an admiral can be wrong!

It is true that, in the same preface, Cooper assured that: "*If Nelson had led in upon an American fleet*, *as be did upon the French at the Nile, be would have seen reason to repent the boldness of the experiment*"... when the American fleet was in its infancy[57].

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[57] Quoted by Mahan *in op. cit*., note p. 275.

Battle of Algeciras.

Date of action : July 6, 1801.

Location: Algeciras, Spain; the Gulf of Algeciras bathes the Rock of Gibraltar, Northern Pillar of Hercules[58]. Geographic coordinates; 36° 08' north latitude and 05° 30' west longitude.

Conflict: French Revolutionary Wars, 1893 – 18th May 1804. Second Coalition, from March 1799 until the Treaty of Lunéville (February 9th, 1801) and the Peace of Amiens (March 25th, 1802). Consulate, 10th November 1799 – 18th May 1804 [18 Brumaire, Year VIII].

Background: Rear-Admiral Linois, who was under the command of Admiral Ganteaume, was given command of a division of three vessels and one frigate which was to sail for Cadiz to join the combined Franco-Spanish squadron[59]. All these forces were to return to the Mediterranean Sea to support Admiral Ganteaume's squadron.

On 13th June, Linois left Toulon and sailed to Cadiz. When he had passed Cape Gata and while preparing to enter the Strait of Gibraltar, he learned from a Spanish ship that Cadiz was blocked by the English squadron of Admiral James Saumarez. Linois was himself followed by English ships to which he had previously given chase and which belonged to Admiral Warren's squadron. Caught between the two enemy squadrons, Linois entered the Bay of Gibraltar. He anchored in the harbor of Algeciras on July 4th. When Admiral Sir James Saumarez received this news, he ran with his Division[60]. On the morning of

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[58] ●The other being the region of Ceuta in northern Morocco.

[59] ●Six Spanish vessels acquired by France and awaiting French crews at Cadiz, as well as six other Spanish ships, commanded by Admiral don Juan Moreno.

[60] ●Three ships of 84 cannons each: The CAESAR, The POMPEE, The SUPERB; 3 of 74: The ANNIBAL, The AUDACIOUS, The VENERABLE ; one frigate and one lougre.

the 6th, Saumarez arrived at the entrance to the Bay of Gibraltar *aka* Gulf of Algeciras.

Military Leaders in Command ●*Marine Nationale*: Rear-Admiral Linois. *Royal Navy*: Sir James Saumarez[61].

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: 6 ships of the line including 3 of 84 guns and 3 of 74. ●*French Navy*: 3 vessels and one frigate.

Strategy or tactics: The winds then varied from north to northwest. The French line consisted from north to south of Le FORMIDABLE, Le DESAIX, L'INDOMPTABLE and, finally, the small frigate La MUIRON. This *embossing line* was to be supported on its right wing by a battery of seven pieces of 24 et of 18 pounds established on a reef called Île-Verte and to its left [north wing] by a battery called *Saint-Jacques' battery*, armed with 5 pieces of 18 pounds. Both batteries were in poor condition and poorly supplied at the time of the battle. Seeing that the French ships were embossed[62] quite far from the coast and that their line of battle was not perfectly flanked[63], Admiral Saumarez[64] wanted to imitate the maneuver of Admiral Nelson at the battle of the Nile[65]: he ordered The VENERABLE, whose captain knew perfectly well the anchorage in the bay, to take the lead of the line. Holding the wind, he had Le FORMIDABLE steer in order to overtake this ship, to pass between the land and the embossing line and consequently to put the French division between two fires. But Linois immediately understood the danger and ordered the cables to be cut.

***Summary of the action*:** At the moment when the English squadron doubled Cabo del Carnero, the French division,

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[61] ●James Saumarez was a Normand, born in Saint-Pierre-Port (Guernsey) on March 11th 1757.

[62] ●That means, immobilized by several anchors.

[63] ●Since both batteries were in poor working order.

[64] ●Not content with having twice as many ships as the French.

[65] ●Attacking with all its forces a part of the French forces. Destruction of the latter: then attacking the rest of the French forces. "If I can use a large number to attack a small number of men... " [*The Art of War*, Principle 13. Chap. VI] see *in fine*. Nelson would successfully repeat this tactic at Cape Trafalgar.

anchored by 10 or 12 fathoms in front of Algeciras, was on the move to take its line of battle. At 8:00 a.m. the English ships were within gun range of Île-Verte. The Spanish battery fired on them, and the battle (from right to left; from south to north] began as the English squadron extended its line of battle. Admiral Linois, on Le FORMIDABLE, judging the tactic of attack of the English by the maneuver of the first ship and of the next two, immediately gave the signal to cut the cables and to run aground so as not to be caught in a pincer. He did not want to play the role of the unfortunate hero in a second edition of the Battle of the First of June.

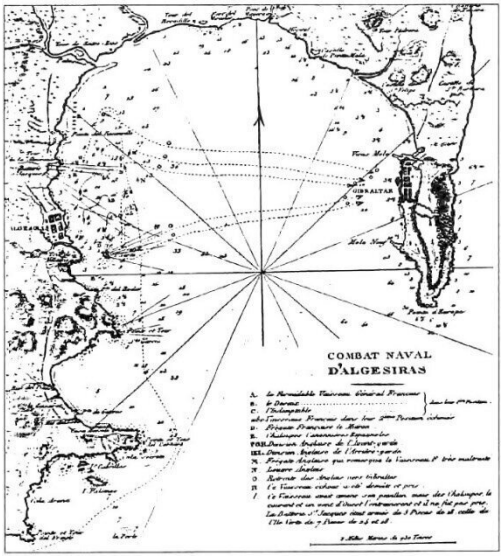
●

The breeze had softened and varied from north to northeast. The movement of course alteration[66] was long and uneven. Le DESAIX suffered from the *enfilades* of the ships that gunned it. L'INDOMPTABLE, on touching, found itself placed in a critical position but did not slow down its fire. Le FORMIDABLE presented its beam out to sea and its bow to Lord Saumarez leader of the English line, who could cannon undisturbed the bow of the French vessel. Two other English ships took their toll within rifle range. This first engagement lasted two hours.

Having succeeded in doubling the left of the French line, the English wanted to seize the Île-Verte, whose Spanish battery, key to the battle, poorly supplied and poorly served by its gunners, had ceased to fire. The frigate Le MUIRON, anchored between the land and L'INDOMPTABLE, suffered greatly from the fire of the last two ships of the English line. The captain of this frigate saw the English boats heading for this island. He immediately detached the 130 rifles of the frigate under the command of an infantry captain. This company arrived just

[66] ●Downstroke, jibing or course alteration. This is the movement of a ship without speed, whose bow deviates from the wind line. [Dictionnaire de navigation maritime, Josse Schoonheyt. Éditions PO] In air navigation this movement is top-down.

early enough to prevent the English from landing. One of their canoes was sunk low and another taken. This reinforcement in Île-Verte changed the face of things. French gunners took charge of the battery, which began firing again with intensity.



One of the English ships, The POMPEE, knockedout a shoal in front of this battery which targeted it. The English ship suffered for a moment the fire of this battery and of the French ship L'INDOMPTABLE. The English brought its flag down, but (contrary to international conventions) was towed by English longboats from Gibraltar[67]. Dragged by the current, it could not be marinated by the French.

After the pause of the naval engagement, seven Spanish gunboats left the port of Algeciras to close the left of the line under the protection of the Saint-Jacques battery. They took such a lively part in the battle that five of them were sunk or put out of action. As the Spanish battery Saint-Jacques had also slowed its fire, Brigadier General Devaux took a detachment of ground troops aboard Le DESAIX, moved to the battery and put it back into action more efficiently and with better precision.

The naval battle had resumed more violently than ever. Under the fire of the batteries of the French ships and the batteries ribs and the kings of the English ships lost their masts and

67 ●Which was in violation of the international law in relation to war catches.

all suffered damage to their sails. Also, those who were embossed cut their cables. The [English] ANNIBAL, stranded near Le FORMIDABLE, suffered the fire of the Saint-Jacques battery and that of this French ship. He brought his pavilion at 14:00 h. Admiral Saumarez abandoned it, stopped the fighting which had lasted six long hours and withdrew under the guns of Gibraltar with the four ships that remained to him.

Casualties & Losses ●*Royal Navy*: The English had lost a third of their forces. The ANNIBAL remained in the power of the French. The POMPEE was completely dismasted. ●*French Navy*: unknown casualties. No ship lost.

As a result of this English defeat*, despite* their victory, the French could not find in Algeciras the means to restore themselves, while the English could, in Gibraltar. They use all the necessary resources of this arsenal to repair the ships and reinforce their crews.

Sources & Reading: ●"La dernière compagne de l'amiral de Linois", André Auzoux, in Revue des études historiques, Picard et fils, Paris, 1909, 97p. ●Memoirs and Correspondance of Admirai Lord de Saumarez, from Original Papers, by the Rear-Admiral Sir John Ross, 2 vol., London, 1838. ●Observations on Naval Tactics, and on the Claims of Mr. Clerk, of Eldin, with extracts of letters of Sir J. Saumarez «in refutation of Mr. Clerk's Tactics being known to Admiral Lord Rodney in 1782 », London.

Naval battle of Cape Trafalgar.

Date of the action: July 12th, 1801.

Location: Cabo Trafalgar, cape located in the southwest of Spain. Geographical coordinates: 36° 11' North latitude and 06° 02' West longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the French Revolution, 1793 - May 18th, 1804. Consulate, November 10th, 1799 - May 18th, 1804 [18 brumaire, An VIII]. Second coalition, from March 1799 until the Treaty of Lunéville (February 9th, 1801) and the Peace of Amiens (March 25th, 1802).

Context: After the naval battle of Algeciras, the British vessels were repaired in Gibraltar, while the French, who had to tow L'ANNIBAL taken from the English, asked the Franco-Spanish squadron of Cadiz to come and escort this ship to this port in order to repair, because Algeciras had no arsenal.

Military Leaders in command ●*Franco-Spanish*: Admiral don Juan Moreno; French Admiral Linois. ●*English*: Admiral Saumarez.

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: 5 ships of the line, including 3 of 84 guns and 2 of 74; two frigates [including one Portuguese] and a brig. ●*French and Armada española squadron*: Le REAL CARLOS[68] 112 guns [three-decker], Le SAN-HERMENEGILDE 112 guns [three-decker], Le SAN-FERNANDO [94 guns], L'ARGONAUTA 74, and La SABINA 44-gun, frigate]. The French squadron commanded by Rear-Admiral Dumanoir consisted of Le SAINT-ANTOINE [74 guns], Le FORMIDABLE 74 guns, [Captain Troude], the frigates La LIBRE 44 and L'INDIENNE 44, and the brig Le VAUTOUR [14 guns].

[68] ●1,700 Spanish sailors died in this accident.

Strategy or Tactics: The fatal misunderstanding (friendly-fire) between the two gigantic Spanish ships was the result of a daring maneuver by the British Admiral Saumarez in the middle of the night. Saumarez succeeded, by a happy combination of circumstances rather than by a diabolical and calculated ruse, in provoking a mortal combat between these two Spanish three-deckers, so powerful that they could only be defeated by themselves. On the French side, let's point out the great feat of Le FORMIDABLE 74, which incredibly succeeded, alone, in repelling and damaging 4 English ships totaling more than 300 guns.

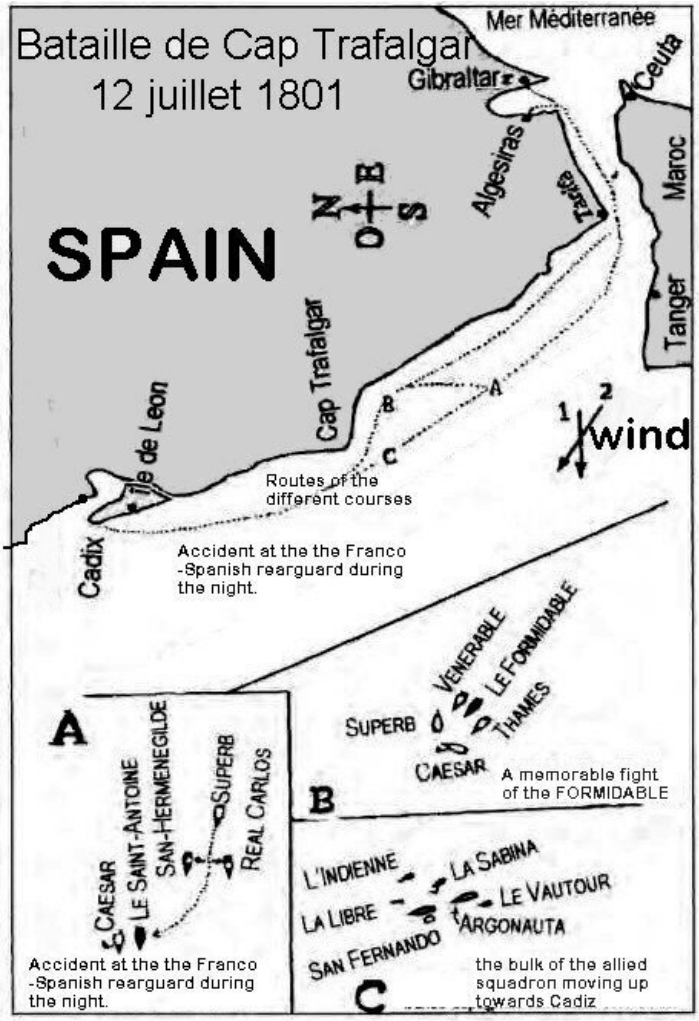
Summary of the Action: The Spanish admiral Don Juan Moreno left Cadiz on July 8th with his Franco-Spanish squadron. On July 9th, the combined squadron arrived in front of Algeciras. The already repaired English ships were on the lookout. The French ships in Algeciras were still in poor condition from the battle of that name, as the facilities of this small Spanish fishing port did not have the warport facilities of Gibraltar.

It was also necessary to tow The ANNIBAL, which had been taken from the British and dismasted. On the morning of the 12th, the combined squadron was ready to leave.

At 1:00 p.m., due to the tide, Moreno gave the signal to set sail. The winds were from the East, but soon a calm disturbed the regularity of the battleline. The English squadron[69] succeeded, not without difficulty, in forming a battleline to the wind of the combined Franco-Spanish squadron. Admiral Moreno, in accordance with Spanish regulations, carried his flag on the frigate La SABINA and demanded that Admiral Linois go with him.

[69] ●Five ships, a Frigate, a Brick and another Frigate... Portuguese.

At sunset, the last ships of the combined squadron were just leaving the great roadstead of Algeciras. Then the night be-



came so dark that the combined squadron could no longer maintain its regular formation. At about 11:00 pm, the British admiral ordered the SUPERB to attack Le SAINT-ANTOINE in the dark, among the rear-guard ships. But to reach this French ship,

The SUPERB had to slide in between the two Spanish giants. The SUPERB slipped between the two Spanish three-deckers, the REAL-CARLOS and the SAN-HERMENEGILDE. In doing so, the English could not resist the temptation to simultaneously drop her port and starboard broadsides on the two Spaniards, before launching itself on the French Le SAINT-ANTOINE, already under attack by the CAESAR.

But the god of war had decided to inflict a humiliation on the two arrogant giant ships. I said that these Spanish ships were so powerful that they could only be defeated by themselves. In the darkness, an incredible mistake was made. The two enormous Spanish three-deckers, which had not noticed the silent and rapid passage and change of position of the English vessel, all lights out, and believing that they were returning fire from an enemy vessel, took each other for adversaries and engaged in a terrible fight in total darkness. Hallucinating and hellish spectacle in absolute darkness. Drawn more and more into this deadly error, they even launched themselves to board each other[70]. The wind suddenly freshened and became impetuous. A fire soon broke out on board the REAL-CARLOS. The flames which devoured it soon reached the SAN-HERMENEGILDE, which could not separate itself from it, both united in this embrace of death by the boarding grapples.

At that moment, the two squadrons were mixed up. Friends and enemies, helpless witnesses, moved away from this gigantic blaze. The two giant ships blew up within twenty minutes of each other. This double explosion was heard as far away as Cadiz, where it had the effect of an earthquake. Only three hundred men, out of the 2,000 that made up the crews of these two super-ships, were able to escape death by throwing themselves into boats. But to make matters worse, they took refuge on the French vessel, Le SAINT-ANTOINE, just as it was flying its flag to confront the two Englishmen [The CAE-SAR

[70] ●This friendly-fire fight seems even more unbelievable, because by the swear words shouted in Spanish, they should have realized the mistake. Perhaps each province of Spain has its own language and swear words!!!

and The SUPERB], who, two against one, had completely dismasted it. The Spanish frigate La SABINA attracted the attention of the English gunners by its night lanterns at the top of the masts[71].

The daylight came to illuminate the Spanish Admiral full of dismay as he saw the incredible losses he had suffered and which would put an abrupt end to his career. But far from thinking he was defeated, the proud Spaniard rallied the rest of his squadron, with the exception of the second French warship (Le FORMIDABLE), whose cannonade he could hear to the east, the breeze being from the southeast. Don Juan Moreno formed a quick battleline with the remaining ships of his squadron to go to the aid of the French ship, heading towards the smoke that he could see in the distance.

Le FORMIDABLE 74, which was fighting hard, could not follow the maneuvers of the squadron because of its broken masts which only allowed low sails. At midnight, this vessel was attacked by five (*yes five!*) English warships which began to pound the French vessel, desperately in the dark, with red balls[72]. Captain Troude, who was very wise, forbade his gunners to fire back, and, seeing that the English were carrying three reconnaissance lights at the horn, he had the same lights hoisted and thus succeeded in getting out of the way by letting himself be pushed back out of the fray. As the Spaniards had done, the English even exchanged a few *friendly-fire* cannonballs between themselves.

At 4:00 a.m., Troude saw four English ships in its waters. It was part of the English squadron: the flagship The CAESAR, The VENERABLE, The SUPERB and the frigate The THAMES.

With dawn rising, the English realized that they had been deceived and prepared to make the French ship pay for its ruse. The VENERABLE and The THAMES soon rushed on Le

[71] ●His rallying signal.
[72] ●Red-hot balls and chain. The cannonballs were heated in furnaces before being sent on their way.

FORMIDABLE, in a pincer movement on both sides. The VENERABLE sent her first broadside over the port quarter and Le FORMIDABLE threw itself on The VENERABLE to pulverize it with its broadsides.

The fiercest fight was engaged at close range, yard by yard, and sometimes at swab length.

The French Captain Troude had two and even three cannonballs fired at each gun to create more devastation in the hull of the English flagship.

During this time, The THAMES was beating the same French warship at the stern. At this point on the vessel, only the French ship's retreating cannons could fire back and return fire.

The two other English ships dashed at Le FORMIDABLE, one after the other, but being unable to overtake it to windward, they took position on its port quarter. The first broadside of the Frenchman dismasted The VENERABLE from its fiery parrot and, soon after, from its mainmast. The VENERABLE let arrive[73], but the French ship followed it in this movement to beat it in the stern, while gunning the English flagship, The CAESAR was in front of the VENERABLE and, therefore, could not retaliate for fear of hitting its compatriot. Not a single French cannonball missed its target. In this position, The VENERABLE lost its foremast and not easily moved away from the battlefield.

When The VENERABLE was out of action, the French ship directed all her fire on The CAESAR. This engagement lasted for half an hour. Although the English flagship overtook Le FORMIDABLE and forced the latter to maneuver constantly to keep to her beam, The CAESAR broke off the fight and took refuge with The VENERABLE to which the frigate The THAMES came to the rescue. The SUPERB, which was on the port side of the French ship, was still to be fought. But the English ship let it happen, passed under the lee of Le

[73] ●Shoot down or get out of the wind.

FORMIDABLE, out of range, broke off the fight, too, and joined the other English warships which were moving away.

At 7 a.m., Captain Troude[74] remained, incredibly, master of the battlefield. He had enough cannonballs left (not to mention the multitude of English cannonballs that littered its hull) so as to keep him going for another hour in the battle. He brought them up to the batteries and repaired the rigging. His sails were in tatters. The land breeze had stopped, and it was in a calm, within gun range of the English squadron whose boats were then busy rescuing The VENERABLE. This vessel had been dismasted from its mizzen mast and the currents were bringing it to the coast. At 10:00 a.m., the wind was freshening. The THAMES tried to take it in tow, but not being able to get up, it ran aground between the island of Léon and the point Saint-Roch, at about fifteen kilometers from Cadiz.

The French captain thought that the English were going to resume the battle after having dressed themselves, because the rest of the combined squadron was still 20 km behind and, as a result, could not provide assistance.

At this point, the British admiral decided to retreat to Gibraltar, abandoning his beached ship and crew to the French.

On the evening of July 13, the combined Franco-Spanish squadron entered the port of Cadiz, only a few hours after Le FORMIDABLE, which received a delirious welcome (from the quickly informed population), for having turned a badly started battle into a victory.

Losses: ●*Franco-Spanish*: Le SAINT-ANTOINE and, of course, the two Spanish three-decks which sank mutually. ●*Royal Navy*: they lost the vessel The VENERABLE. The number of killed and wounded was very important on both sides.

Consequence of this English defeat: If this victory aroused immense joy in the two Bourbon kingdoms of France and Spain,

[74] ●Aimable Gille Troude (1762-1824) was appointed Rear-Admiral in 1811. He was nicknamed by Napoléon: "L'Horace français." Horace was famous for his courage in his battle with the Curiace.

the loss by "friendly fire" of the two largest naval units of the Spanish Navy created an effect, of course, diametrically opposed. In England, emphasis was placed on the involuntary masterstroke of Admiral Saumarez, whose audacious night maneuver had created confusion and misunderstanding between the two Spanish super-ships. World maritime history offers no other example of such a colossal accident, although misunderstandings are common between units of the same nation. On the other hand, Le FORMIDABLE's exploit against five English ships was put under the bushel in England.

Sources & Readings ●Victories, conquests, disasters, reverses and civil wars of the French, from 1792 to 1815. Volume thirteen, written by a society of military and literary men, Paris, C.L.F Panckoucke, ●Memoirs and Correspondence of Admiral Lord de Saumarez, from original papers, Rear Admiral Sir John Ross, 2 vol. in London, 1838. ●Narrative of the proceedings of his Majesty's Sqnadron under Rear-Admiral Sir J. Saumarez, from [...] its sailing from Plymouth to the conclusion of the action with the combined fleets, Baron James de Saumarez, London, 1801.

Naval Battle of Poulo-Aor

Date of action: February 14th, 1804.

Location: island of Pulau-Aur or Pu lo-Aor, 160 km northeast of Singapore, at the entrance to the China Seas[75]. This island is now in Malaysia (Malaysia). Geographical coordinates: 104°30' East longitude & 02°30'North latitude.

Conflict: French Revolutionary Wars [1793 – 18th May 1804]. Consulate, 1st November 1799 – 18th May 1804 \19 Brumaire Year VIII.

Background: The Eternal War had resumed between France and England. Admiral Linois' small squadron was given the task of cruising and destroying English trade in the Indian Ocean. Linois made his first sortie from the island of France on 8th October 1803 with the ship Le MARENGO [74 guns], La BELLE-POULE [frigate of 40 guns], La SÉMILLANTE [frigate of 36] and the corvette Le BERCEAU, commanded by Lieutenant de vaisseau Halgan. These ships carried French troops intended to reinforce the garrisons of La Reunion Island and Batavia[76]. In doing so, this squadron captured many English merchant vessels. Then the French squadron stopped in Sumatra, entered the *Malacca Strait* where French ships captured and burned two ships and forced English captains to burn six ships as well as stores filled with rice, pepper and above all, opium[77]. On their way to Batavia, the French attacked the English settlement of Bencoolen, on the southern coast of Sumatra, two ships were captured, several others were burned. They inflicted

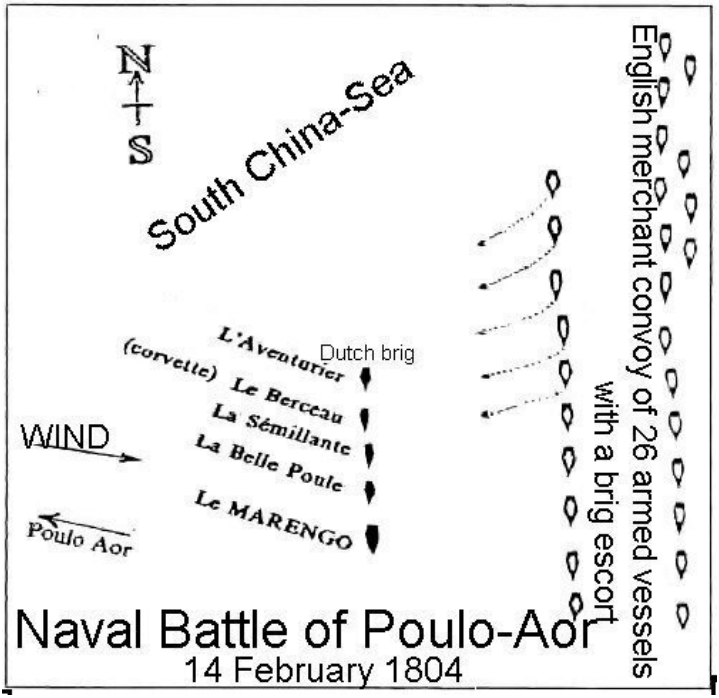
[75] ●Coming from Jakarta by the Strait of Gaspar (*aka* Karimata *aka* Carimata *aka* Caramata).

[76] ●Today Jakarta, located in the west of the island of Java, Indonesia, at the time colony of the Nederland, which was under French protectorate since the Nederland was in French hands.

[77] ●The English traders were already secretly trafficking drugs (opium), a trade that would quickly lead to an Anglo-Chinese war, because the Chinese government wanted to ban drug addiction on its territory. It was a prefiguration of the Medellin Cartel.

considerable damage on the English. But this untimely attack awakened the British with regard to their convoy from China when secrecy was essential.

On December 12th, 1803, the French squadron arrived at Batavia, landed the troops, and stayed there for nearly a month. Then reinforced by the Dutch brig L'AVENTURIER, the squadron headed for the China Sea to attack *the Great Annual*



Convoy from China to England. From some merchants, Linois learned that an escort of two ships and two frigates was to accompany the merchant convoy. The information was wrong, and Linois was fooled.

Military leaders in command ●*English*: Captain Dance commanded the convoy. ●*French Navy*: Vice-Admiral Linois.

Military Forces involved ●*English*: merchant ships escorted by warships; in all, 27 sails including 4 warships; 700 English guns

against 192 French guns. ●*Marine Nationale*: one ship, two frigates and two brigs.

Strategy or Tactics: Napoléon once claimed that an army of deer led by a lion was more formidable than an army of lions commanded by a deer. This naval combat is an almost perfect illustration of this. The eight or ten largest ships of the East India Company hoisted the Red Cross Ensign of the Royal Navy, with the Union Jack at First Quarter, in order to make the French believe that they were an entire squadron of the Royal Navy. The Battle of Poulo-Aor, in which 8 or 10 English indiamen [merchant ships] managed to stand up to French warships[78], is comparatively similar to the naval battle of Tranquebar on August 1st, 1758, in which seven Royal Navy warships failed to capture eight French merchant ships supported by a single warship.

Summary of the Action: From February 14th to May 14th, the five English ships were anchored near Poulo-Aor. The lookouts announced sails[79]. Convinced that it was the convoy expected, Linois weighed anchor, made his squadron hold the wind and stay in order of battle. If Linois had not made a mistake, he could have captured the unescorted £200,000 convoy. Seeing the French ready to fight, Captain Dance had the wisdom to have the flag of the Royal Navy hoisted instead of the red flag of the merchant navy. Thus, the convoy seemed solidly escorted. The five ships of the pseudo–Royal Navy escort moved away from the convoy, in line, to come closer to reconnoiter the French squadron. These British ships then resumed to hold the wind and stay in a solid line of battle. At 5:30 p.m., Linois signaled that his intention was to avoid a night fight and wait until daylight to attack. He maneuvered, however, to try to win the wind against the convoy.

The next day, the French, with their only ship of the line, found themselves facing "five English ships-of-the-line." According to Linois's information, the convoy was supposed to

[78] ●English merchant ships had 700 guns against 192 French.
[79] ●27 in number.

consist of only 17 ships of the British East India Company (Indiamen), six *country-ships*[80], and the little war brig. The French admiral had to conclude that the three additional large ships he saw should constitute the announced escort.

During the night, the French ships had won the wind to the English and were only a range and a half away in the morning; but the calm did not allow to join them. A French Council of War voted in favour of the attack. At 8:00 the breeze began to rise. The English convoy in *two lines* took the southern route. That of the *wind* was composed of eight or ten ships which seemed intended to escort or defend the others. The French squadron headed for the convoy, all sails out. Five English ships then advanced to meet him. Linois, fearing that his squadron would be caught in the crossfire, returned to the wind.

Around noon, he again maneuvered to attack the English escort. But the latter showed again that it had a design to defend itself boldly. Finally, at 12:30, Le MARENGO fired the first cannon-shots and the battle began against the "protection column" reinforced by the 5 escort vessels.

The most advanced English ship waited for the others and then, all together, they opened a hell of a fire. For although they were merchant ships of the BEIC[81], they were all armed with powerful artillery. In fact, the British convoy had about 700 guns compared to 192 for the French. It was a total imbalance.

The five English ships[82] that had turned, joined those fighting the French. Three of those who had taken part in the action first maneuvered to cut off the French from the rear while the rest of the English convoy, covered with sails, began to maneuver to envelop the French. Seeing himself on the verge of being surrounded, Linois decided to take advantage of the

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[80] ●Historically, a *country-ship* was a ship belonging to any East Indian company and trading from port to port in that country. In other words, it was an Indian merchant ship not belonging to the British East India Co. England had forbidden Indian companies to trade directly with Europe, since this country had the monopoly on trade and on transport of goods...

[81] ●British East India Co.

[82] ● Displaying the flames of war.

smoke that surrounded him to turn lof for lof to come to port. Then, heading east-north-east, he moved away from the pack which continued to pursue the French division until 15:00 by shooting on them several broadsides without effect.

Thus, ironically, the hunter was hunted by *a game that had been armed*, to take a modern image[83] of the French singer Chantal Goya. Linois had been put to flight by a mercantile frenzy. The course of his career was not stimulated.

Casualties & Losses ●Zero.

Consequence of this French defeat: The capture of this convoy would have dealt a terrible blow to English trade, so its arrival in England, after this action, was celebrated with brilliance. Captain Dance who had organized the defense received many awards including the *Order of the Bath* from the hands of the King himself. He was made *a Peer of England*. The British East India Company granted the crews gratuities amounting to £50,000, a quarter of the total value of the cargo. As for Linois, he returned to Batavia, empty-handed and ridiculous, and was subsequently the object of heavy reprimands when news of his ridiculous error crossed the Channel.

Sources & Readings ●Public Correspondence. Intercepted Dispatches from India, from the Marquis Wellesley, taken on board the Hope, by Rear-Admiral Linois (Private correspondence published in the French newspaper Le Moniteur), London, 1805. ●La France et l'Angleterre en Indochine et en Chine sous le Premier-Empire, Extrait du "T'oungpao", etc., Henri Cordier, Leide, 1903. ●"La dernier compagne de l'amiral de Linois (1803-1806)", André Auzoux, extrait de la Revue des études historiques, 1909-1910, Éditions A. Picard et fils, Paris, no date. ●La Marine et les Colonies sous le Premier Empire: journaux et souvenirs, published by F. Teissèdre, Librairie F. Paillart, Abbeville, 2000, [Contains unpublished lettres of 1806, by Admiral de Linois, "La défense de l'île de la Réunion en 1810" by

[83] ●Made fashionable by the songs of Chantal Goya.

chef de bataillon Soleille, and the "Journal de la frégate "L'Aréthuse": 1812-1814" by surgeon-major Félix Charyau.]

Battle of Houat Island.

Date of action: 5 May 1804[84].

Location: French island in the Atlantic Ocean. Geographical coordinates: Latitude 47°25' North, Longitude 03°00' West.

Conflict: French Revolutionary Wars, 1793 – 18th May 1804. Consulate, 10th November 1799 – 18th May 1804 [19 Brumaire, An VIII].

Context: The French *Grande Armée* was preparing to invade England and was concentrating its landing forces in the Boulogne area. The rallying at Boulogne, Étaples, Wimereux and Ambleteuse of more than 2,000 landing craft dispatched from all points along the coasts of France and Holland resulted in several battles

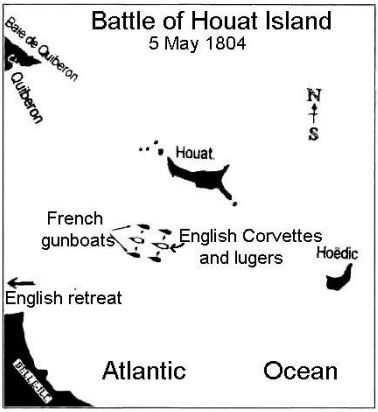
Military leaders in command ●*Marine Nationale*: Lieutenant Tourneur. ●*Royal Navy*: Captain John Wesley Wright.

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: one corvette and one lugger[85]. ●*Marine Nationale*: four gunboats.

Strategy or tactics: the port of Boulogne, where all these naval forces were concentrated, had just been completed. Certain types of landing craft were created especially for the "Boulogne Army. Thus, the *prames* were ships 33 m long and 7.50 m wide. Draught: 2 m to 2.50 m. Three-masted ships rigged like a 20-gun corvette. They had 12 guns of 24 pounds, 38 sailors, and could carry 50 horses in the hold. *Gunboats*: 23m by 5m, 1.65m draught. Rigged in brigantines. *Artillery*: 3 24-pounder guns and a 200 mm French howitzer; 22 men. The *Gunboats*: 18m by 4m. Draught: 1.20 m. Rigged as a lugger. Artillery: one 24-pounder gun in front and one field gun behind; 6 men. Stable of 2 horses in hold to pull the guns. *Barge*: 18m by 3m and 1m

[84] ●May 8th, according to Clowes, vol.5, p.63ff.
[85] ●Small three-masted ship; lougre, lugger.

draft. Rigged with three masts like the luggers. A four-pounder gun aft and a French 150mm howitzer in front[86], five-man crew.



Summary of the action: On 5th May 1804, a flotilla of four gunboats commanded by Lieutenant Tourneur was en route to Lorient. It was intercepted and attacked by a strong corvette [Captain Wright] and an English lugger. The battle raged for some time. The English ships had more than twice as many guns as the French ships. But the French gunboats had superior calibres. Soon, crushed by the cannonballs and grapeshot spewed by the French 24-pounder guns, the two English ships stalled and tried to flee. Tourneur then launched his gunboats in pursuit and caught them near the island of Houat. The battle resumed[87], but soon after, the two English ships brought their flags down[88]. "At daylight, the VENCEJO (18 guns), Commander John Wesley Wright, found herself becalmed near the mouth of the Morbihan, and driven by the ebb close to the "Teigneuse Rock" off which, for safety, she had to drop anchor. The VENCEJO was a (277 tons) quarterdecked and forecastled brig, mounting eighteen 18-pounder carronades, but pierced for twenty guns, and carrying fifty-one men and twenty-four mousses (a crew of 75)... She was approached from the mouth of the river by six brigs, each of three guns; six luggers, each of two guns; and five luggers, each of two guns; the total force arrayed against her being seventeen vessels, thirty-five guns (i.e., six long 24-pounders, twenty-four long 18-pounders, and five 36-pounder carronades), and between 700 and 800 men, under Lieutenant Laurent

[86] ●Or a 150mm Prussian howitzer or a 200mm mortar.
[87] ●Only with cannon.
[88] ●Clowes, vol.5, p.63ff.

Tourneur. The enemy rowed down withing range, and at 8:30 a.m. they began to fire. By 9:30 a.m. they had so decreased their distance that Commander Wright swept his brig broadside on to them. For nearly two hours he engaged them within about a cable's length; but, having his rigging cut to pieces, his hull badly mauled, three of his guns disabled, two men killed, and twelve, wounded, and most of his armament temporarily put out of action by the fall of the booms, he at length ordered the colours to be struck." Wright and his men were carried prisoners into France.

Casualties & Losses ●*Royal Navy*: Wright only admitted to two deaths and 12 injuries. But with such insignificant numbers, it is unlikely that a man as energetic as him would have surrendered. The warship was taken by the French, with their crew (around 75). ●*Marine Nationale*: human losses unknown.

Consequence of this English defeat: the French flotilla continued its way to the port of L'Orient. "Wright, carried prisoner to Paris, died in the Temple (prison), on October 28th, 1805, in circumstances which strongly suggested foul play[89]."

Sources & Readings ●A Dive into Bonaparte's Council, on *Hit Projected Invasion of Old England*, Thomas Martyn, published by the author, London, 1804. ●*England and Napoléon in 1805*. Being the Despatches of Lord Whitworth and Others, now first printed from the originals in the Record Office, by Oscar Browning, London, 1997 ●*Napoléon and the Invasion of England: the Story of the Great Terror…* With numerous illustrations from contemporary prints, caricatures, etc., Harold Felix Baker Wheeler and Alexander Meyrick Broadlev, 2 vol. John Lane Publications, London, New York, 1908. ●*Histoire Maritime de la France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel-Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London. ●The soldier of the Boulogne Camp 1803-1805. Dr. Fernand Beaucour,

[89] ●Clowes vol.5 p.64

Centre d'études napoléoniennes, Levallois, 1987. ●British Strategy in the Napoleonic War, 1803-1815, Christopher D. Hall, Manchester University Press, Manchester & New York, 1992.

Battle of Heyst-Ann-Zee

Date of action: 16th May 1804.

Location: Heist-Aan-Zee, in the north of Belgium. Geographical coordinates: latitude 51°20' North, longitude 03°15' East.

Conflict: Wars of the French Revolution, 1893 – 18th May 1804. Consulate, 10th November 1799 – 18th May 1804 [19 brumaire an VIII.

Context: This was the last battle of the French Revolution. On 16th May, a division [of 19 gunboats, 47 Batavian gunboats and some transports] sailed from Vlissingen under the command of Vice-Admiral Verhuel to Ostend. The convoy was escorted by two French prames, La VILLE-D'AIX and La VILLE-D'ANVERS. The aim of the manoeuvre was to concentrate in Ostend several landing ships for an invasion of England. At Heyst, the convoy was attacked by an English squadron commanded by Commodore Sidney Smith.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: commodore Sidney Smith. ●*Marine Nationale consulaire*: vice-admiral Verhuel.

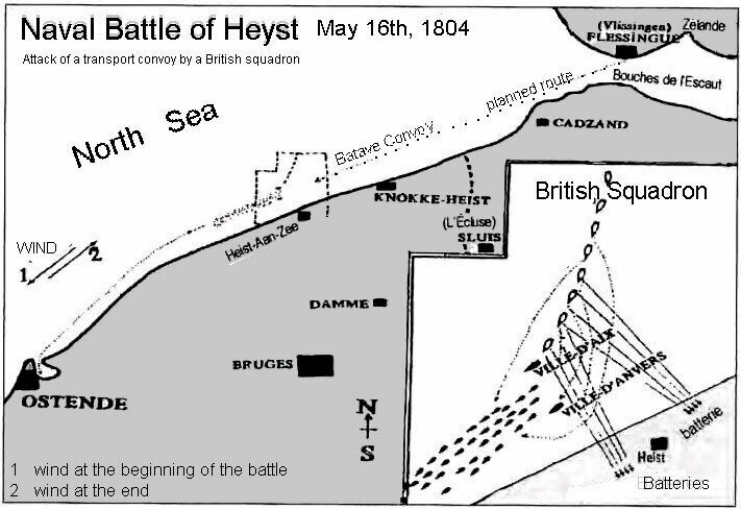
Military Forces involved ●*Marine Nationale consulaire*: 19 gunboats; 44 gunboats and transports; later two barge sections. ●*Royal Navy*: some 40 ships.

Strategy or tactics: As usual, the French pointed mostly at the mast and the English mostly at the crews and to waterline. This explains why French losses were often higher.

Summary of the action: At the sound of the first shots, two sections of barges, commanded by Captain Lambour, were dispatched from Ostend in front of the fighting division. They joined it and gave a tow to several disgorged boats that the wind carried to the coast. The action having taken place very close to the land, the coastal batteries assisted the ships of the flotilla.

The light field artillery, which followed all the movements of the division on the coast, kept up an extremely lively fire on the English ships which were very inconvenienced by its projectiles.

The weight of the fight fell especially on the rear-guard;



the two prames of escort[90] fulfilled their task of escorting to the end by causing many damages to the English. After having almost entirely exhausted her ammunition, La VILLE-D'ANVERS ran aground on the coast. In this position, she defended herself fiercely and repulsed all the attempts made by the English to seize her or set her on fire.

Towards the end of the battle, the winds having become contrary, only part of the Franco-Batavian fleet was able to reach Ostend. The others returned to the Scheldt.

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Nationale*: unknown. ●*Royal Navy*: a hundred killed and wounded.

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[90] Le VILLE-D'AIX and Le VILLE-D'ANVERS. Prame: n.f. from the German prahm. A flat-bottomed ship with oars and sails, drawing little water and capable of carrying a large amount of artillery. The prame was used during the First Empire for coastal defence.

As a result of this English defeat, the French convoy was able to pass the same day or the next.

Sources & Readings ●A Thirst for Glory. The Life of Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, Tom Pocock, Aurum, London, 1996. ●The Life and Correspondence of Admiral Sir William Sidney Smith, John Barrow, 2 vols, Richard Bentley, London, 1S48. ●The French Revolution in Holland. La République Batave, Louis Désiré Legrand, Paris, 1894. ● Revolutionary turmoil: Batavian Republic, French army, Annie Jourdan and Joep Leerssen, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 1996. ●Patriots and Liberators : Revolution in the Netherlands 1780-1813, Simon Schama, Fontana Press, London, 1992.

Naval battle of Bruneval.

Date of the action: June 10th, 1805.

Location: Port located near Le Havre, France, today Saint-Jouin-Bruneval. Geographical coordinates: 49°39' North latitude and 00°10' East longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the First Empire [18th May 1804 - 1814 and 1815], Third Coalition, from 8th April 1805 to the Treaty of Presburgh, 26th December 1805.

Context: On June 10th, 1805, at 7:00 a.m., the capitaine Hamelin sailed from Le Havre with a division composed of 2 corvettes-gunboats, 4 gunboats, 3 gunhips, 8 barges and 14 transports.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: unknown. ●*Marine Impériale*: captain Hamelin.

Militari Forces involved ●Marine *Impériale*: 2 gunboats-corvettes; 4 gunboats; 3 gunboats; 8 barges and 14 transports. ●*Royal Navy*: one Frigate, one brig, one cutter.

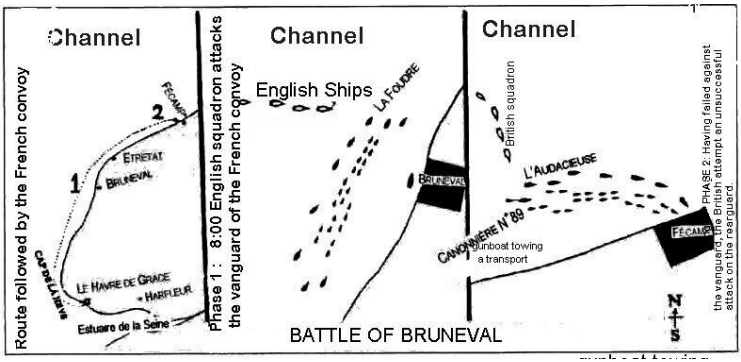
Strategy or Tactics: The English blockade cruise attacked one point of the convoy, first the vanguard and then the rear; without success.

Summary of the action: No sooner had the French convoy made a few leagues than, through Bruneval, it was attacked by a frigate, a large three-masted corvette, a brig and an English cutter. The English directed their fire particularly at the head of the French division. At this point the corvette-cannoneer LE FOUDRE[91] was stationed. It fought vigorously, and, assisted by the other ships of the front-guard, forced the English, who were very badly treated in their rigging, to withdraw to the open sea. The French division continued on its way. At 1:30 p.m., the English, who had repaired their damage, attacked again, but this

[91] ●Enseigne de vaisseau Gocherel

time their efforts were directed at the rear guard protected by the corvette-cannoneer L'AUDACIEUSE[92]. Seeing that the English were attacking the gunboat[93] N° 89 which had a transport in tow, Roquebert himself came to take the tow under fire from the English. At 3:00 p.m., the damage once again forced the English to retreat to recover and the French division was able to reach the port of Fécamp.

Casualties ●*Marine Impériale*: 3 men killed and 12 wounded. ●*Royal Navy*: unknown; probably similar to those of the Marine Impériale.



Consequence of this English defeat: The convoy of transports passed. All of these convoys were intended to concentrate troops, equipment, and transportation at certain points along the coast in preparation for an invasion of England.

Sources & Readings ●British Strategy in the Napoleonic War, 1803-15, Christopher D. Hall, Manchester University Press, Manchester, New York, 1 992. ●Napoléon at the Boulogne Camp, Fernand Nicolay, Cassell, London, 1907. ●Les flottilles côtières de Pierre le Grand à Napoléon, de la Baltique à la Manche, amiral Maurice Dupont, Economica, Paris, 2000. ●Histoire maritime de France contenant L'Histoire des Provinces et villes maritimes des combats de mer, depuis la

[92] ●Lieutenant (Navy) Roquebert-l'aîné.
[93] ●Auxiliary Ensign Giret,

fondation de Marseille, 600 ans avant J.-C., de la Flibuste, des Navigations, Voyages autour du monde, Naufrages célèbres, découvertes, Colonisations, de la Marine en général, avant, pendant et depuis le règne de Louis XIV jusqu'à l'année 1850, par Léon Guérin, Dufour et Mulat éditeurs, Paris, 1851.

Naval Battle of Granville.

Date of action: July 16th, 1805.

Location: The battle took place south of the islet of Chausey, 17km from the Cotentin peninsula. The group of islets depends on the commune of Granville (Manche). Approximate geographical coordinates of the battlefield: 48° 54' north latitude and 01° 55' west longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the First Empire [18th May 1804-1814 and 1815]. Third coalition, from 8th April 1805 to the Treaty of Pressburg, 26th December 1805.

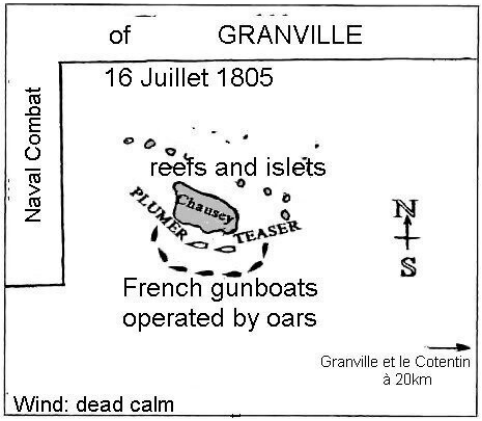
Background: Jacob, who later became a Rear-Admiral, was responsible for directing and accelerating the movements of the divisions of the flotilla from Saint-Malo to Cherbourg. The flotillas concentrated in order to transport the invading French Army to England. From Granville, Jacob sighted, on July 15th at night, two English corvettes anchored 17km offshore, near the islands of Chausey. Judging that the weather would be calm during the night, he resolved to attack these vessels with a section of the flotilla on retreat at the port of Granville. As a result, he ordered Commander Collet to go out with seven gunboats and row over the English ships to storm them.

According to Clowes[94]: "On July 15th, [1805], the gun-brigs PLUMPER, Lieutenant James Henry Garrety, and TEAZER, Lieutenant George Lewis Ker, being becalmed, and likely to be carried into danger by the tide, anchored at some little distance from one another near the Chausey Isles, off Granville. They were observed from that town, and during the following night seven gun-vessels, each mounting three long 24-pounders, and an 8-inch howitzer, and full of men, were sent out to attack them. The approach was made by means of sweeps; and, at 2:30 a.m. on the 16th, the vessels opened fire on The PLUMPER. She

[94] ●Clowes, Vol.5, p.177ff.

was so situated as to be able to make no adequate resistance, and at length, when Garrety had lost his arm, she surrendered, after having made as gallant a fight as her position allowed. At 8:45 a.m. the French, reinforced by the PLUMPER, attacked the TEAZER, which set all sail and tried to escape, but was soon surrounded and captured. The brigs seem to have lost somewhat severely, but no exact account of the numbers killed and wounded is to be found. Nearly all that part of the Ostend division of the invasion flotilla which had not previously passed further to the westward was assembled by the end of May at Dunquerque (Sic!) under Vice-Admiral Verhuel, who anxiously awaited an opportunity to carry it on to Ambleteuse.

Military leaders in command ●*Marine impériale*: capitaine de vaisseau Jacob; *capitaine de frégate* Collet. ●*Royal Navy*: Lieutenant James Henry Garrety (The PLUMPER);, Lieutenant George Lewis Ker (The TEAZER).



Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: Two briggs TEAZER [10 caronades[95] and four 18-pounders cannons] et The PLUMPER [12 caronades and 2 18-pounder cannons]. ●*Marine impériale*: 7 small gunboats.

Strategy or tactics: The attack was done at night and by rowing in order to make the most of the element of surprise; but the English were on their guard.

[95] ●Large cast iron cannons used in the navy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The first had been melted down at Loch Caron, Scotland; hence their name.

Summary of the action: Collet left at the entrance of the night. At 2:30 a.m. on the 16th, he was within gun range of the two english brigs which opened fire while remaining at anchor. The gunboats continued to row on them to approach them, but the current did not allow them to get close enough. They retaliated against English fire when they were a quarter range away. The cannonade sustained each other intensely for an hour, at the end of which The PLUMPER brought its flag. The TEAZER, obliged to resist alone the gunboats, would not have been long in surrendering also, if a reversal of the tide had not come to remove the French boats, whose rowers were moreover exhausted, having handled the rowing throughout the night.

Captain Collet then anchored his gunboats and thus gave the crews a rest before restarting the battle.

By 6 a.m., the current had become less strong. Collet weighed anchor and headed for The TEAZER which he began to cannon again with vigor. At 7:00 a.m., The TEAZER set sail, but *calmness* or lack of sufficient wind not allowing him to leave and the gunboats having reached pistol range, he also brought his flag.

At 14:00 the French returned triumphantly to Granville with their two catches.

Casualties & Losses ●*Marine Impériale*: almost all the blows of the English having carried in the sails and rigging of the gunboats, they experienced some damage, but they had only five wounded including Captain Collet. ●*Royal Navy*: the French found 17 wounded, including the commander of the PLUMPER, on board the English ships. A few killed had just been thrown into the sea.

Consequence of this English defeat: The two English ships were taken by the French. No strategic consequence.

Sources & Readings ●William Laird Clowes,*The Royal Navy*, in 6 volumes, Sampson Law, Marston & Co., London. ●*A Norman Archipelago. The Chausey Islands and their history*. Work decorated with engravings and edges, Vicomte Paul de Gibon,

published in Coutances in 1918. ●*Les Marins de Napoléon*, Auguste Thomazi, J. Talandier, Paris, 1978. ●Le soldat du camp de Boulogne: 1803-1805, Dr. Fernand Beaucour, Centre d'études napoléoniennes, Levallois, 1987.

Naval battle of Gravelines.

Date of action: 17th July 1805.

Location: North Sea port; not far from Dunkerque. Geographical coordinates: 50° 59' North latitude and 02° 07' East longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the First Empire [18th May 1804 - 1814 and 1815]. Third coalition, from 8th April 1805 to the Treaty of Presburg, 26th December 1805.

Background: After being thwarted by the winds for more than two months, Vice-Admiral Verhuel finally found favourable weather to lead the main body of the battalion landing fleet from Dunkirk to Ambleteuse where it was concentrated with the aim of invading England in the near future.

Military Leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Captain the Honorable Edward King. ●*Marine Impériale*: Vice-Admiral Verhuel.

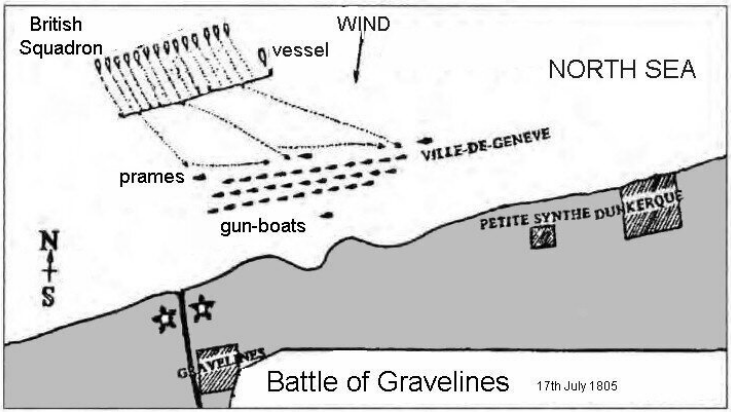
Military Forces involved ●*Marine Impériale*: 4 prames[96] and 32 gunboats. The 4 prames were: Le VILLE-D'AIX, Le VILLE-DE-GENÈVE, Le VILLE-D'ANVERS, and Le VILLE-DE-MAYENCE. ●**Royal Navy**: one *razed ship*[97]; 3 or 4 sloops and bombs, 2 frigates, 3 large corvettes, 9 gun-brigs. (Clowes says half a dozen gun-brigs) The ARIADNE 20, Captain Edward King, in fact, the number of warships varied from day to day.

Strategy or tactics: As all the coast between Calais and Ambleteuse had been provided with numerous very powerful batteries

The Vice-Admiral Verhuel marched his flotilla in two lines, with the ships staggered, so that they could all fire out to

[96] ●Pram: large flat-bottomed landing ship.
[97] ●Lightened by one or more decks, or some superstructures.

sea at the same time. He placed the four prams, two in the centre and one at each end of the outer line. Captain Lambour, com-



manding the guns, took up his position at the head. The gunboats were formed into three divisions: the vanguard and the rearguard, each under the command of a battalion captain, and the center, commanded by the admiral himself.

Summary of the action: On 17th July, in the afternoon, the wind seemed to settle in the N.E. At 17:00, Admiral Verhuel set sail with four French prams and 32 Batavian gunboats. These ships were in Dunkirk's roadstead at the time, because the violent northerly and northerly winds which had been blowing for the previous few days had forced the troop transport and the gunboats to return to the port.

The English cruise, with one razor-sharp ship, two frigates, 3 three-masted corvettes and nine brigs, was quietly observing these movements from its anchorage off Gravelines. The wind being light and the prams not very good, the flotilla took nearly four hours to get to Gravelines abeam. Immediately, the English hoisted their sails and headed towards the Franco-Batavian line. The British began their fire at long range, but Vice-Admiral Verhuel did not fire back until they had come closer. The English attack against the head of the line was not very aggressive. They attacked a little more strongly against the

Centre. They then gathered all their forces against the rear guard.

This part of the French battleline was protected by the VILLE-DE-GENÈVE prame[98].

In a short time, two or three French gunboats were disabled and forced to run aground to avoid sinking. The escort pram itself had its main mast broken and this damage having hampered its maneuver, it hit the shoal. The English ships then wanted to take advantage of this to bomb them or force them to surrender. But the pram retaliated with a fire so dense that the English were forced to abandon them. When Boissy saw this, he put his ship back in the water and continued on his way. At about 11:00 p.m. the fighting ceased entirely, and the English left and abandoned the flotilla.

As soon as Captain King perceived "how the enemy[99] [the French] were heading, he cut his cables, made sail to meet Ver Huell [Verhuel], and, at about 9:15 p.m., opened fire upon him, eventually driving ashore or disabling eleven of the gun-vessels, and damaging Le VILLE-DE-GENÈVE, in spite of the very heavy fire kept up both by the flotilla and by the [coastal] batteries. Between 11:00 p.m. and midnight, the rest of the Division succeeded in anchoring off Calais. The noise of the firing brought from the Downs [from England], The TRUSTY 50, Captain Georges Argles, the VESTAL 28 [Captain Stephen Thomas Digby], and three sloops. The VESTAL, outsailing her consorts, and joining King at 4:00a.m. on the 18th, subsequently recommenced action with the flotilla. But the Dutch were too well protected by the forts; and, after a two hours' cannonade, the British drew off, and bore away to participate in another engagement which was by that time in progress to the westward, and towards which the TRUSTY and her consorts were already making their way. Rear-Admiral Lacrosse, at Boulogne, knowing of Verhuel's movements. Had organised a diversion in favour of his colleague, and had ordered several divisions of gun-

[98] ●Under the orders of Lieutenant Boissy.
[99] ●Clowes, Vol. 5 pp.178ff.

vessels to get under way as if to attack the British squadron off the port. This squadron, which included The IMMORTALITY 36 [Captain Edward William Campbell Rich Owen], The HEBE 32, [Captain Macajah Malbon], and The ARAB 20, [Captain Keith Maxwell], weighed to meet the enemy's craft, one hundred and thirteen in number, and ultimately drove them, at about 4:30 a.m., under the batteries north-west of Vimereux."

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown. Clowes only declares: "in this affair the British loss was 4 (1 mortally) wounded." This seems rather implausible for such a long fight.

Consequence of this English failure: The flotilla continued on its way, reached the roadstead of Calais where it anchored in line. The pram VILLE-DE-GENÈVE and the gunboats entered the harbour. The English interception had failed.

Sources & Readings ●British Strategy in the Napoleonic War, 1803-1815, Christopher D. Hall, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1992. ●Les flottilles côtières de Pierre le Grand à Napoléon, de la Baltique à la Manche, Admiral Maurice Dupont, Economica, Paris, 2000. ●Les difficultés portuaires rencontrées à Boulogne pour le projet napoléonien d'Expédition en Angleterre, 1803-1805, Fernand Beaucour, Centre d'études napoléoniennes, Levallois, 1993. ●La vaine attente par Napoléon au château de Pont-de-Briques de la flotte franco-espagnole, pendant l'été 1805, Fernand Beaucour, Centre d'études napoléoniennes, Levallois, 1989.

Naval battle of Boulogne.

Date of the action: July 18th, 1805.

Location: French Channel coast. Geographical coordinates: 50°43' North latitude and 01°37' East longitude.

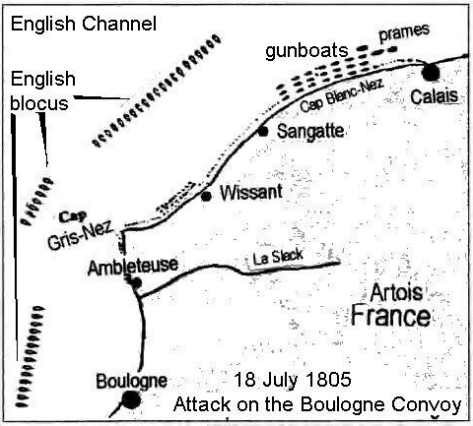
Conflict: Wars of the First Empire (18th May 1804-1814 and 1815). Third coalition, from April 8th , 1805 to the Treaty of Presbourg, December 26th, 1805.

Context: Planning to invade England, Napoléon concentrated troop transports in all the ports of the English Channel, under the surveillance of several divisions of the Royal Navy. Admiral Lacrosse was informed of the approach of the Battalion flotilla which, under the command of Admiral Verhuel, had just taken position at Ambleteuse in view of this invasion of England. On the 18th, at daybreak, Lacrosse had several divisions of the ships, which formed the embossing line in the roadstead of Boulogne, set sail. They went offshore as if to attack the English blockade station at its anchorage. "The great invasion flotilla, upon the movements of which almost the entire Navy of France may be said to have been waiting, numbered, when it reached its maximum force, no fewer than 2293 vessels, including 954 transports, upwards of 700 schooner, brig, or lugger-rigged gun-vessels, chiefly armed either with three long 24-pounders and one 8-inch mortar, or with one long 24-pounder and a field-gun; a number of ship-rigged prames each carrying twelve long 24-pounders, and having accommodation for fifty horses, and about 400 schuyt-rigged "péniches[100]." Divisions of these craft were assembled at Ostend, Dunkerque, Calais, Ambleteuse, Vimereux, Boulogne, and Étaples, Boulogne being the general headquarters of the whole operation and of the commander-in-chief, Vice-Admiral Eustache Bruix, who, being in ill-health,

[100] ●"*Péniche* is the French phonetic spelling of the word *pinasse,* as pronounced by the English. It was a rowing and sailing ship of the Mediterranean frigate type. Jal, "Archives Nav.," I., 453,

was given as his assistant Rear-Admiral Jean Raymond Lacrosse. For the purpose of accommodating and protecting the flotilla, many of the ports named were either enlarged, or practically created, and all were strongly defended by means of batteries. Thy were, moreover, as they still are, naturally difficult of access to vessels dependent only on sail power; for they are faced by sandbanks and washed by cross-tides."[101]

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: unknown. ●*Marine Imperiale*: vice-admiral Verhuel; admiral Lacrosse; Marshal Davout.



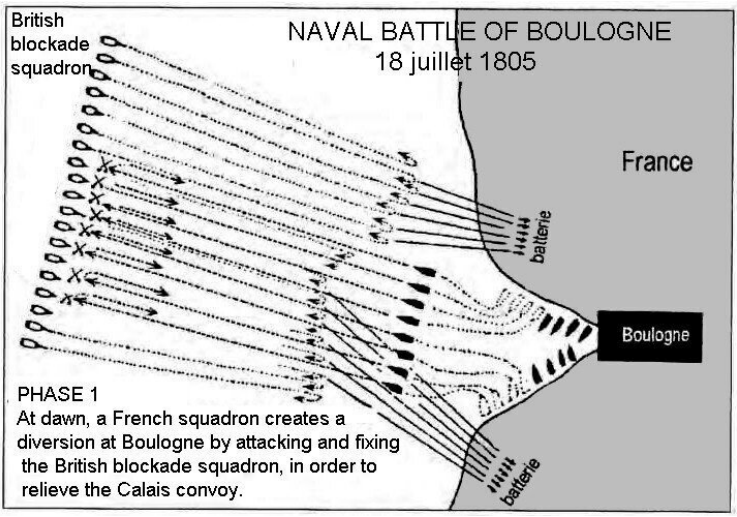
Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: about fifty vessels. ●*Marine Imperial*: 21 gunboats and 3 prames.

Strategy or tactics: This battle was preventive. Knowing that a convoy was arriving, a French division went on a diversionary attack in order to tie the hands of the English blockade whose mission was to prohibit maritime traffic in this sector. The French flotilla, too weak to defeat the blockade fleet, tried to lure the British close to the coastal battleships.

Summary of the action: Seeing the French coming, the English weighed anchor and came to meet the French fleet. The battle began, fierce.

[101] *Source:* William Laird Clowes, volume V, p.62

The French divisions, after having fired for some time on the English ships, withdrew towards the embossing line in order to draw the English within range of this line and of the shore batteries. But the latter, as soon as the bombs approached them, took to the sea. The French divisions would follow them again and then return to their lines to draw them in. This maneuver of the French flotilla produced a very useful diversion in favor of the Dutch flotilla.



At about 3:00 p.m., Admiral Verhuel sailed from the roadstead of Calais[102]. He took the head of his line and placed the prams at the rear guard. Marshal Davoust had come to join the admiral in the roadstead of Calais. He wanted to share the dangers of his crossing to Ambleteuse. It was precisely under the capes Blanc-Nez and Griz-Nez that the English had posted themselves to intercept Admiral Verhuel. As soon as the flotilla arrived across the first of these capes, it was attacked by a score of English ships. But the English commander of these forces, not finding his own units effective enough to stop the flotilla in its tracks, made them move away under full sail to join those

[102] ●With 21 gunboats and three prames (flat-bottomed ships).

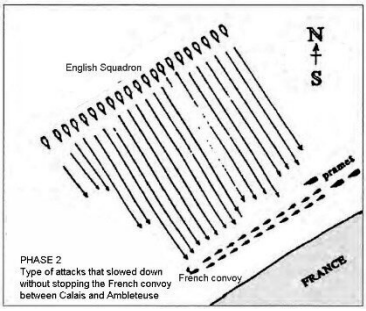
waiting for Admiral Verhuel under Cape Griz-Nez and in the space between the two capes. These united forces amounted to about fifty vessels, ships of the line, frigates, corvettes, bombardments and brigs, carrying more than 900 guns, while the 21 gunboats and the three prams had only 200.

At the level of Wissant, the attack began again. Both sides were covered with anti-personnel gun fire[103]. But the Franco-Batavian flotilla, with flat bottoms, had succeeded in entering a narrow channel situated between the coast and the "*Banc à Laine*" [a sandbar], the English ships being obliged to stay off this sandbar, they fired only with cannonballs [no antipersonnel gunfire]. Under the cape Gris-Nez, where the biggest ships could approach land within pistol range, the battle became hotter.

All the English ships concentrated to prevent the Franco-Batavians from circling this cape. Some English ships fought them from the beam, others tried to block their passage and to envelop the head of the French line. In spite of the most intense gun fire, the gunboat mounted by the Batave Verhuel and the French Davoust managed to pass the cape. The whole column followed this movement and advanced in good order towards the roadstead of Ambleteuse, hugging the coast at the distance of a stone's throw. The English, although certain at the time that they could not prevent the flotilla from reaching the roadstead, continued to accompany it to its anchorage, sending broadside after broadside at close range. They moved away when the French dropped anchor. However, after running out to sea, the English changed their minds and returned to attack the anchored French flotilla. But the Franco-Batavian ships were then in a favorable position to defend themselves, and the English ships quickly gave up this useless at-tack to quickly stall.

[103] Antipersonnel or Biscay shells, canister shells, bullet shells, grapeshot, schrapnel.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown.



Consequence of this English failure: The French convoy was able to reach its concentration point and fulfill its mission.

Sources & Readings ●Britain's Role in the formation of the Third Coalition against France, 1802-1805, Gregory Benjamin Austin Fremont, University of Oxford, 1991 ●Napoleon and the Legion of Honor at the Camp de Boulogne, 1801-1805, Albert Chatelle, preface by Prince Napoleon, Youth Publication, Paris, 1956 ●Les Querelles franco-anglaises, André Verley, Société des éditions de la Côte d'Opale, Boulogne, 1 979. ●Histoire de Boulogne-sur-Mer, Cl. Seilljer, M. Rouche, A.-D. Kapferer, A. Lottin, Presses universitaires de Lille, Lille, 1983. ●The Prises of War; the Naval Prize System in the Napoleonic Wars, 1793-1815, John Richard Hill, Stroud, Royal Naval Museum Publications, 1998. ●The Third Coalition [...] 1805-6 (1806-7), Ernest Marsh Lloyd, The Cambridge Modem Hïstory, Cambridge, 1902. ●Victories, conquests, disasters, reverses and civil wars of the French, de 1792 à 1815, by a society of military men and people of letters, C.L.E Panckoucke, Paris, 1817-1822.

Naval Battle of Ferrol.

Other names: Naval Battle of Quinze-Vingt; Naval battle of 22 July. The name of the battle comes from the number of ships: "Fifteen" English and "Twenty" Franco-Spanish.

Date of action: July 22nd, 1805.

Location: The area of the battle is located off the coast of Spain, 200 km west of Ferrol or Cabo Finisterra. Battlefield coordinates: 44° 00' north and 10" 50' west.

Conflict: Wars of the First Empire [18th May 1804 - 1814 and 1815]. Third Coalition against France, from 8th April 1805 to the Treaty of Pressburg, 26th December 1805.

Context: Emperor Napoleon 1st wanted the control of the English Channel for only three days with the aim of invading and taking total control of England, from the Camp of Boulogne; as did the French under William the Bastard. This was precisely what the English people would not accept to fall under the French boot and find themselves annexed to the French Empire like other Europeans, as they had been indirectly annexed to the Kingdom of France in 1066. Several English squadrons were watching over the French ports. Calder blockaded Le Ferrol, a port in Spanish Galicia, where Gourdon's French squadron was anchored. Admiral Stirling was guarding the port of Rochefort, where Missiessy and his French ships were located. Cornwallis kept a watchful eye on Admiral [Honoré Joseph Antoine] Ganteaume's French squadron at Brest. Nelson blocked Admiral [Pierre Charles de] Villeneuve in Toulon. But this did not prevent a squadron from leaving Brest and going to the West Indies where the French captured an English convoy of four merchants escorted by a British corvette which, unfortunately, fled at the beginning of the interception. On his return from the West Indies, Villeneuve met Calder's squadron reinforced by Stirling's squadron from Rochefort.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral Robert Calder, ●*Marine Impériale and Armada española*: Rear-Admiral Pierre, Charles, Jean-Baptiste, Silvestre de Villeneuve[104]; Admiral Federico Carlos *Gravina* y Napoli [an Italian].

Military Forces involved

Naval Battle of Ferrol	
Franco-Spanish	Royal Navy
1. *L'ARGONAUTA* 80, Adm. Gravina 2. Le TERRI BLE 74, Capt. Mondragon 3- *L' AMERICA* 64, Capt. Juan Darrac 4. *L'ESPAÑA* 64, Capt. Bern. Munos 5. *Le SAN-RAFAÈL* 80, Comm.Montez 6. *Le FIRME* 74, Capt. Villavicencio 7. Le PLUTON 74, J.Cosmao-Kerjulien 8. Le MONT-BLANC 74, La Villegris 9. L'ATLAS 74, Capt. P. N. Rolland 10. Le BERWICK 74, J. Filbol-Camus 11. Le NEPTUNE 80, Comm.Maistral 12. Le BUCENTAURE 80, Villeneuve 13. Le FORMIDABLE 80, Dumanoir 14. L'INTRÉPIDE 74, Capt. Péronne 15. Le SCIPION 74, Capt. Bellanger 16. Le SWIFTSURE 74, Lhospitalier-V 17. L'INDOMPTABLE 80, Capt.Hubert 18. L'AIGLE [74], Capt. P. Gourrège 19. L'ACHILLE [74]. Capt. Deméport 20-L'ALGESIRAS 74, Le Tourneur Frigates: L'HORTENSE 40, La CORNÉLIE [40], La DIDON 40, Le RHIN 40, La SIRÈNE 36, THÉMIS 36, Le FURET 18. Cotre: L'ARGUS 16.	1-HERO 74, Capt. Alan Hyde Gardner 2-AJAX 80, Capt. William Brown 3-TRIUMPH 74, Capt. Henry Loman 4-The BARELEUR 100, George Martin 5-AGAMEMNON 64, John Harvey 6-WINDSOR-CASTLE 100, Ch.Boyles 7-DEFIANCE 74, Capt. Philip Durham 8-PRINCE-OF-WALES 100, R. Calder 9-REPULSE 74, Capt. Arthur Legge 10-REASONNABLE 64, J. Rowley 11-GLORY 98, r-a Charles Stirling 12-THUNDERER 74, Capt. Lechmere 13-MALTA 80, Capt. Edward Buller 14-DRAGON 74, Capt. Edward Griffith 15-WARRIOR 74, Capt Samuel Linzee Frigates etc: The frigate EGYPTIENNE 40, The frigate SIRIUS 36, The cutter FRISK, The lugger NILE.

Source: W. Clowes, vol.5, p.112. *The Spanish ships are in italics.*

●20 Franco-Spanish vessels. ●15 English ships of the line, two frigates, a cutter and a lougre (wolf).

Strategy or tactics: It was a battle of blind men. At dawn, fog already began to prevent anyone from seeing any enemy. The two antagonists could only glimpse each other during rare gaps of mist and smoke. It was initially a cannonade in parallel lines.

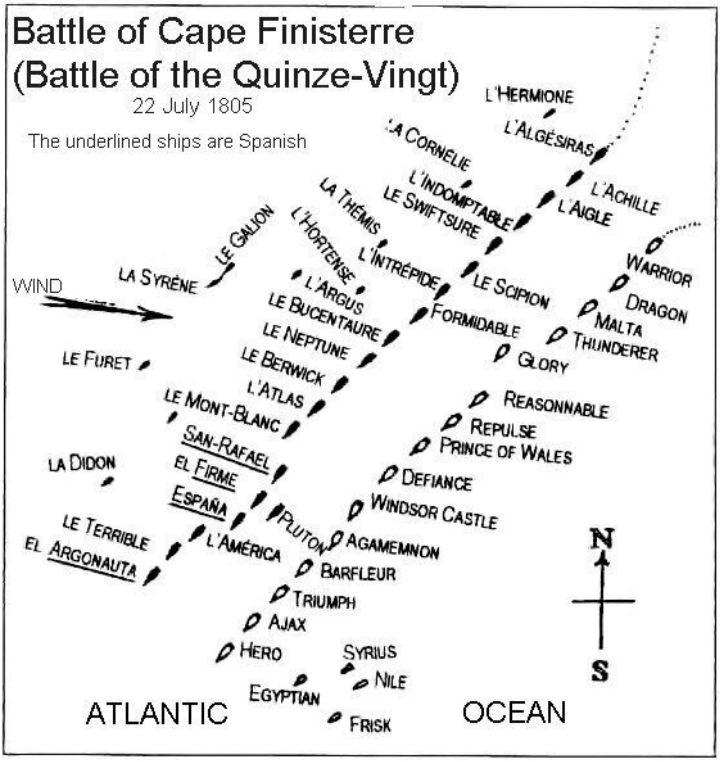
[104] 1st French admiral (1763-1806)born in Valensoles in Provence on 31st December 1763. He entered the Marine Royale as "Guard of the Flag".

This fight seemed to be similar to those fought in previous wars. In parallel lines, the two squadrons fought for hours and inflicted about equal damage on each other. In this kind of confrontation, victory belonged to the one who remained the longest on the battlefield. At this *Battle of the Fifteen-Twenty*, the two fleets fought at half-range of cannon, a distance far too great to obtain from the artillery those terrible effects which oblige a ship to bring its flag down. The cannonade, which began around 5:00 p.m., was very sharp. The windward fleet, which could not take benefit from being windward because of the mist, suffered all the disadvantages of this mist: its clueless ships fell while drifting into the enemy line which they saw only at the last moment when it was too late. This happened to the Franco-Spanish squadron and the mist prevented Villeneuve from noticing it. The disturbance caused in the battleline of the combined Franco-Spanish squadron by the drift of three ships and by the movements of Le PLUTON, dug large holes in the French line and, as a result, exposed the others to rough pincers, as the enemy infiltrated these gaps to circumvent the line.

Paradoxically, the French victory of the Fifteen-Twenty led to the English victory at Trafalgar, because Villeneuve having pursued the English only *belatedly*, Napoléon decided to dismiss him. However, Villeneuve wanted to redeem himself, to try everything before being relieved of his duties by Admiral Rosily whom Napoleon sent to Cadiz. If he had won the victory at Trafalgar, he would have restored his honor and his *love-rating,* his popularity, with Napoléon. So he played for all he was worth, he played the French and Spanish fleets on a roll of the dice, lost and was... murdered, presumably in retaliation.

Summary of the Action: The weather was extremely foggy on the day when the fleets of Admirals Villeneuve and Calder met and, on both sides, it was difficult to recognize the forces of the enemy. However, both sides maneuvered to join. A few thinning intermittently allowed for a meeting during the day. Villeneuve took advantage of these rare moments to make the necessary signals. He had his fleet formed on a line of the convoy. The Spanish ships took the lead of the French column and

Admiral Gravina came to place himself in the lead. The English had formed their line and were advancing as close as possible to the wind, against the French battleline.



This maneuver gave rise to the assumption that they wanted to attack the rearguard of the combined Franco-Spanish fleet. Villeneuve therefore had his buckets turned backwind.

Villeneuve's maneuvers made Calder believe that he was going to have his line cut by the Franco-Spanish who had the advantage of the wind. He hastened to maneuver, and the battle began on the same side.

This fight seemed to resemble most of those fought in previous wars where two fleets in parallel lines gunned each other for several hours with no other result than to inflict approximately equal damage on each other; the victory belonged to whoever remained last on the battlefield. Here, the two fleets fought at half gun range, a distance far too great to obtain from artillery bombardment, those terrible effects which oblige a ship to bring its flag down. The cannonade, which began around 5 p.m., was very lively. At 17:30, a large English three-deck of 110 guns found itself out of line and attacked L'INTRÉPIDE placed towards the Center. But despite his great superiority in artillery, he found himself so mistreated by the French ship that he was forced to stall. He did not take part in the battle at all. Ubfortunately, Captain Perronne was killed.

At the head and tail of the battle line, the English encountered strong opposition, but the windward fleet, which could not, because of the mist, take advantage of it[105], had to suffer the disadvantages: the main one being that of seeing his helpless ships irresistibly drifting into the invisible enemy line. This happened to the Spanish fleet and the mist prevented Villeneuve from noticing it and remedying it.

However, attempts were made by others. Thus, about 6 p.m., Captain Cosmao-Kerjulien, commander of Le PLUTON, noticed that the Spanish ship Le FIRME, dismasted of its artimon, its great mast and its small mast of hune, drifted uncontrollably towards the English line. Le PLUTON then left the French line and came to place itself between the English ships and Le FIRME. A furious cannonade began between the English and Le PLUTON.

Soon, alone to fight against several English ships, because no Spanish ship came to his aid, Le PLUTON returned to the French line, abandoning to his fate the Spanish who fell into the hands of the English.

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[105] ●The windward wind.

Another Spanish ship, Le SAN-RAFAÈL, was taken in drifts between the two lines of battle. It was lost sight of in the fog and also fell into the hands of the English. Another mistreated Spanish ship, L'ESPAÑA, also drifted into a no-man's-land. Le PLUTON, decidedly good Samaritan, once again left the French line to give them a helping hand and prevent it from falling into enemy hands of the English.

The disturbance caused in the line of the combined Franco-Spanish fleet by the drift of the three ships mentioned and by the movements of the PLUTON[106] exposed Le MONT-BLANC and L'ATLAS to harsh attacks. L'ATLAS, especially, was heavily engaged and an English cannonball blew up its boxes of cartridges contained in the trunk that served as a quarter bank, seriously wounding Captain Rolland. As several English ships continued to endanger L'ATLAS, Le NEPTUNE [Captain Maistral] came to help it repel its attackers.

At 20:30, night added to the mist and the fight decreased in intensity. The cannon fire gradually decreased and ceased entirely at 21:00.

Throughout the night, both squadrons remained on the battlefield, ready to resume fighting the next morning. But, on the 23rd, at daybreak, the weather was still foggy. At 7:00 a.m., the mist finally lifted and the French saw the English fleet 15 km *downwind*, in a messy stall. The frigate Le DIDON, which had gone to reconnoiter the English, reported that their ships were very damaged and that three of them were towed. Villeneuve warned Gravinas that he intended to pursue the English fleet and engage in a decisive battle; therefore, at noon, the whole combined fleet went after the English, but by evening the French had gained only a league over the English squadron.

On the 25th, the wind became violent and the sea stormed; so Villeneuve decided to abandon the hunt to return to Vigo before the bulk of the storm.

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[106] By digging large holes in the French line.

Casualties & Losses ●Several hundred killed on both sides.

Consequence of this English defeat: Admiral Calder was recalled to England to explain the causes of his flight from the French squadron. He was court-martialed and acquitted only because he was able to prove that his squadron had suffered so much damage during the battle that it was impossible for him to resume the battle the next day.

For his part, Admiral Villeneuve, who, although master of the battlefield, had waited until noon the day after the battle to launch himself in pursuit of the English, lost the confidence of the French sailors and especially that of the Emperor who took the decision to have him relieved of his duties. He therefore tried to redeem himself by fighting, three months later, the famous battle of Cape Trafalgar. Admiral Calder having been sacked, Villeneuve had to face the greatest Admiral that England had ever begotten : Horatio Nelson.

Sources & Readings ●*The Life of Lord Nelson*, par Robert Southey, Edit, H. Chapman, Niagara-on-the-Lake [Ont.], 1831. ●*La Mort de l'amiral Villeneuve et le sergent Guillemard*, André Vovard. Impr, de Levé, Paris, 1910. ●*Minutes of the Proceedings at a Court Martial, assembled on board Mis Majesty's Ship Prince of Wales, in Portsmouth Harbour*, on [.. .] the 23rd day of December, 1805, and the three following days, for the trial of Sir Robert Calder, Bart., Éditions J. C. Mottley, Portsmouth, 1806.

Naval battle of Fécamp.

Date of action: July 23rd, 1805.

Location: Port in the north of France. Geographical coordinates: 49° 45' North latitude and 00° 22' East longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the Napoleonic Empire [18th May 1804-1814 and 1815]. Third coalition, from April 8th, 1805, to the Treaty of Presburg, December 26th, 1805.

Context: The Hamelin's division was joined at Fécamp by two gunboats as well as some boats and barges that were in this port. Thus strengthened, Captain Hamelin set sail[107] under the eyes of an English blockade squadron. The English limited themselves to observe his movements.

But the wind had grown stronger and the sea was heavy, circumstances which gave the advantage to the English ships, larger. They thus advanced to attack the French division.

Military Leaders in Command ●*Marine Impériale*: Captain Hamelin; frigate Captain Roquebert ; enseigne Hilaire ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral Calder.

Strategy or Tactics: no boarding due to bad weather. The battle was a long cannonade. The British did not attack in parallel lines, but rather in columns directed sometimes towards the rear guard, sometimes towards the vanguard.

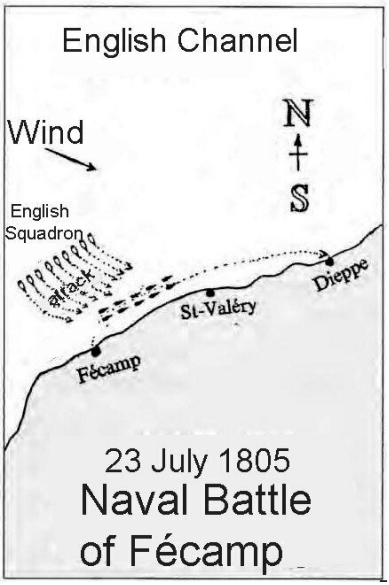
Summary of the action: The English attacked more particularly the French rearguard which was protected by the corvette-canonière L'AUDACIEUSE; Captain Roquebert, in command of this ship.

The French fought with great fury. Hamelin, who was marching in front, wanted to help with his rearguard. He turned

[107] ●On 23 July at 5:00 h.

around with his corvette-cannoniere and La FOUDRE and came to position himself in front of L'AUDACIEUSE.

The two corvettes-cannonieres, thus united, closed in on the English in firing until they were within rifle range, then to a short gun range and simultaneously brought the artillery and musketry to bear on them. The English forced their sails to protect themselves from the murderous fire of the corvettes and put themselves on a part of the line where they would have to fight only the gunboats and flatboats which (they assumed, because of roughness of the sea), were out of condition to make an advantageous use of their artillery. But the French gunners showed efficiency. Ensign Hilaire commanded three gunboats whose slide mounts did not allow them to fire through. He had the gunboats turn around and run straight at the English ships, firing from the front. This fire, which crossed with that of the French ships that had remained in line forced the English to back up and retire the open sea.



Two hours later, the English ships had repaired their damage and changed some sails. They returned to the combat. The battle was fought at point-blank range. The cries of "Boarding! À l'abordage!" resounded through the French line and L'AUDACIEUSE asked by signal for permission to board the English. The captain Hamelin, considering the sea too rough, refused to grant this request. He was, with regret, obliged to give up this type of attack. The gun battle, the bombardment continued fiercely. After an hour of this massacre, the English, who

had had several masts cut off and their tugs damaged, stopped thr fight and retreated towards England.

Casualties & Losses ●Human losses and material were very substantial on both sides.

Consequence of this English defeat: The French captain Hamelin continued his route with the intention of disembarking his wounded at Dieppe, but the bad weather forced him to stop in this port. He departed again shortly afterwards and subsequently arrived safely in Boulogne.

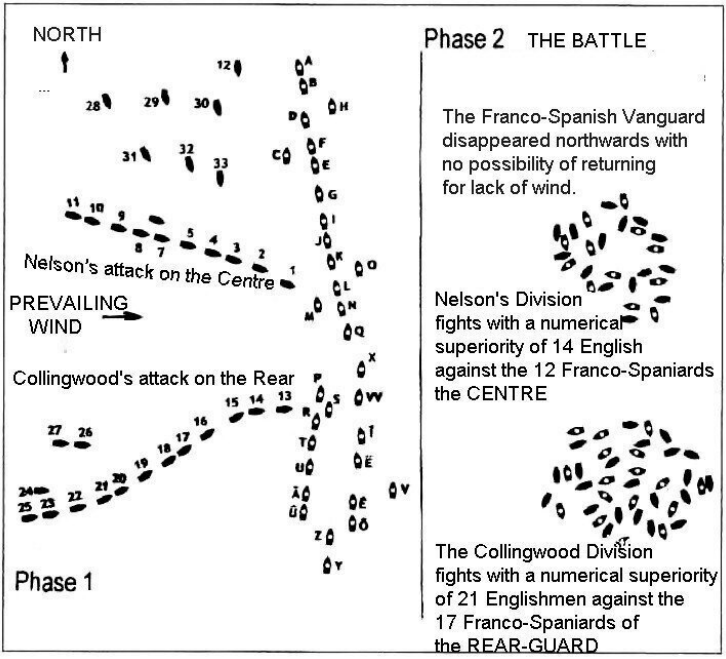
With these flatboat concentrations, Napoléon was ready to invade England.

Sources & Readings ●History of the City and Abbey of Fécamp, Léon Fallue, published in Rouen by Impr, de N. Periaux, 1841 ●Fécamp; pages of history, faces of the city, Gilbert Décultot, published by L. Durand & Son, Fécamp, 1979. .●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, vol. II. London.

Naval battle of Cape Trafalgar.

Date of the action: October 21st, 1805.

Location: The battlefield is located 4 miles from Cape Trafalgar [Spain] and 27 miles south-southwest of Cadiz. The geographical coordinates of Cabo Trafalgar are 36 degrees 11 minutes North latitude and 6 degrees 2 minutes West longitude.



Conflict: Wars of the Napoleonic Empire [18th May 1804 - 1814 and 1815]. Third coalition, from April 8th, 1805, to the Treaty of Presburg, December 26th, 1805.

Context: On October 19th, Vice-Admiral Villeneuve sailed out of Cadiz at the head of the combined Franco-Spanish fleet to

battle Admiral Nelson. Why did he really leave? According to some, because he had nothing left to lose. He was strongly criticized by Le Moniteur, the official French newspaper, by Napoléon, by the Spanish, and by the French who reproached him for not having destroyed the English squadron at the end of the Cape Trafalgar Battle, and Admiral Rosily had just left Paris to relieve him of his duties, of his commandment. A victory over the great Nelson would undoubtedly have restored his prestige in the eyes of all, his own, and especially those of the Emperor Napoléon.

Military Leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: admiral Nelson; admiral Collingwood. ●Marine *Impériale and Armada española*: Vice-Admiral de Villeneuve[108]; Italian Admiral don Frederico Gravina.

Military Forces involved.

●*Royal Navy*: **Northern Column** [1032 guns], **1]**● The VICTORY [3-decker of 120 guns; flagship of Amiral Nelson], **2]**● The TEMERAIRE [3-decks of 110 guns], **3]**● The NEPTUNE [3-decks of 110 guns], **4]**● The LEVIATHAN [74], **5]**● The CONQUEROR [74], **6]**● The BRITANNIA [3-decks of 120 guns, flag of the Rear Admiral Count of Northesk], **7]**● The AGAMEMMON [64], **8]**● The AJAX [80], **9]**● The ORION [74], **10]**● The MINOTAUR [74], **11]**● The SPARTIATE [74], **12]**● The AFRICA [64], a little further north. **Southern column**: **13]**● The ROYAL SOVEREIGN [three-decker of 120 guns; Admiral Collingwood's flagship], **14]**● The BELLE-ISLE [74], **15]**● The MARS [74], **16]**● The TONNANT [80], **17]**● The BELLEROPHON [74], **18]**● The COLOSSUS [74], **19]**● The ACHILLES [74], **20]**● The REVENGE [74], **21]**● The POLYPHEMUS [64], **22]**● The SWIFTSURE [74], **23]**● The DEFIANCE [74], **24]**● The THUNDERER [74], **25]**● The DEFENSE [74], **26]**● The PRINCE [3-deck 110-gun], **27]**● The DREADNOUGHT [3-deck 110-gun], **28]**●The ALGECIRAS **29]** ● Numerous frigates including The EURYALUS[109].

[108] Vice Admiral Pierre Charles Jean-Baptiste Silvestre de Villeneuve (1,763-1,806) was born in Valensoles, Provence on December 31st, 1763.

[109] ●Le SWIFTSURE and Le BERWICK, that day in the French squadron, had been taken from the English on July 24, 1801, and March 8, 1795. They had kept their names, The BELLE-ISLE and The TONNANT, that day in the English squadron, had been taken from the French. There was thus a SWIFTSURE in each squadron.

♦***French Marine Impériale and Real Armada Española***: regular if line oriented 5.E.- N.W. 1**]**♦ El NEPTUNO [80 guns; Spanish], 2**]**♦ Le SCIPION [74 guns; French], 3**]**♦ Le RAYO [100 guns; Spanish], 4**]**♦ Le FORMIDABLE [94 guns, Dumanoir-Lepelley's flagship], 5**]**♦ Le DUGUAY-TROUIN [74 c], 6**]**♦ Le MONT-BLANC [74], 7**]**♦ El SAN FRANCISCO-DE-ASIS [74 guns; Spanish], 8**]**♦ El SAN-AGUSTINO [74 guns; Spanish], 9**]**♦ Le HÉROS [74], 10**]**♦ El SANTISSIMA-TRINIDAD [130 c. ; esp.][110] 11**]**♦ Le BUCENTAURE 80 [vice-admiral de Villeneuve's flagship; captain Magendie], 12**]**♦ Le NEPTUNE [80 c., captain Maistral], 13**]**♦ Le REDOUTABLE [78 guns, commander Lucas], 14**]**♦ El SAN LEANDRO [64 c.; esp.], 15**]**♦ El SAN JUSTO [74 c.; esp.], 16**]**♦ El SANTA-ANA [Spanish flagship of 112 guns, of vice-admiral don Alava], 17**]**♦ L'INDOMPTABLE [80 c., captain Hubert], 18**]**♦ Le FOUGUEUX [74 guns, captain Baudoin], 19**]**♦ L'INTREPIDE, 20**]**♦ El MONARCA [74 guns; Spanish], 21**]**♦ Le PLUTON [74], 22**]**♦ El BAHAMA [74 guns; Spanish], 23**]**♦ L'AIGLE [74], 24**]**♦ El MONTANES [74 guns; Spanish], 25**]**♦ L'ALGESIRAS [74 guns, Magon's flagship], 26**]**♦ El ARGONAUTA [80 guns; Spanish], 27**]**♦ El SAN ILDEFONSO [74 guns; Spanish], 28**]**♦ L'ACHILLE [74], 29**]**♦ El PRINCIPE-DE- ASTURIAS [110 guns, Admiral Gravinas; Spanish], 30**]**♦ Le BERWICK [74], 31**]**♦ El SAN-JUAN-NEPOMUCENO [74 guns; Spanish], 32**]**♦ Le SWTFTSURE [74 guns].

Strategy or tactics: At the time of the battle, the Franco-Spanish squadron formed a 6^{km} long column, irregular and oriented from the S.-E. to the N.-W. and drawing a curve whose concavity was turned towards the English. To the classical tactic of parallel combat which resulted in single ship battles, Nelson innovated by preferring the two columns which penetrated perpendicularly the enemy line and which triggered the *melee.* These two "arrows" attacked the enemy line at two points: in the first third and in the middle of the line. These two simultaneous attacks cut the line in three sections. The Franco-Spanish vanguard of

[110] ●Spanish Admiral ship of Cisneros Vicente, a huge four-decker of 130 guns, the most powerful ship of the time.

10 ships did not intervene during the first two hours of the battle and when it received the order to intervene from Villeneuve, it was too late; the battle was virtually lost. As for the other two sections of the Franco-Spanish allied line, they were numerically inferior to the two English columns that attacked them. This tactic, which Nelson had already thought up on October 9th, gave him numerical superiority and proved to be brilliant: "[...] Thinking that it is almost impossible to lead a fleet of 40 ships[111] into battle [in line] with variable winds, in foggy weather, [he ordered the formation of two columns] of 16 ships each with a reserve of 8 ships. The enemy's fleet ... will probably be so large that the head will not be able to help the tail ... and [thus] the English ships in presence must be a quarter more numerous than the enemy's cut off ships."

Thus, Nelson managed to locally regain numerical superiority. However, since the Allied line was concave, the two English columns could have been surrounded if the Admiral Dumanoir, commanding the Vanguard, had taken the initiative to fall back to the south before receiving the order. This could have changed the course of the battle.

Villeneuve, for his part, believing that the English fleet consisted of only 21 ships, had intended to attack it in two lines: one [of 21 ships] would have faced the English line of equal number, while the remaining 12, chosen from among the best sailing ships, would have waited for the battle to begin before attacking the English line by putting it in a pincer movement between two fires. Villeneuve therefore divided his forces into two distinct parts. The first, designated as the base line, was composed of three divisions, each with 7 ships, 21 ships in all. The second [Reserve Corps] consisted of the remaining 12 ships divided into two divisions of 6. The French fleet followed the formation order before departure. But then, seeing that the English fleet was too numerous, the Order of Battle was changed to form a single, tightly packed line of battle.

[111] Including 27 of the line.

As for the cooperation between the two allies, a bit like the Anglo-Dutch at Béveziers, the junction of two squadrons, French and Spanish, under the same command was not without clashes. In order to protect their sensibilities, Gravina was not officially under the command of Villeneuve. The Spaniards hated the French with whom they were temporarily allied. Twelve years earlier, at Toulon, the same Admiral Gravina had fought with Hood against the French. Gravina did not consider himself to be Villeneuve's subordinate, so the latter had to take the gloves off when deciding on the battle formation, which was not respected[112]. Knowing the lack of enthusiasm of the Spaniards to fight for the French, Napoleon recommended to evaluate their forces by dividing their numbers by two.

According to this estimate, their 15 ships represented the equivalent of 7 or 8 French ships. The Spaniard don Alava was to command the Allied Vanguard, the Frenchman Dumanoir-Lepelley the Rear Guard and Villeneuve and don Balthazar Cisneros Vicente the Center. Lieutenant-General Don Frederico

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[112] Whether under the Empire or under royalty, the problem was the same; ANIMOSITY OF THE SPANISH AGAINST THE FRENCH "His Majesty [Louis XIV] does not expect that the new union of France with Spain will have erased the old prejudices of the Spanish nation against the French. On the contrary, he judges that they will be further increased in the minds of many individuals since the last attempts made for peace and since they see the dismemberment of the States of the Monarchy of Spain. [In order to save the unity of its immense American and Asian empire (the Philippines) Spain had inevitably to sacrifice its provinces of Flanders and Italy]. Also, the King of France does not consider as suspicious people, nor as enemies those who, in the present conjuncture, show either resentment or opposition against France. It is sufficient for His Majesty that they be faithfully attached to the King of Spain. It is in this way that the King considers the President of Castile [the President, or more exactly the Governor of the Council of Castile in 1711] was don Francisco Ronquillol, very contrary to the interests of the French, although he received on all occasions, from the King, marks of the particular esteem with which His Majesty honored him. " [from Mémoire pour servir d'instruction au sieur marquis de Bonnac, lieutenant pour le Roi au Pays de Foix, allant en Espagne en qualité d'Envoyé extraordinaire de Sa Majesté, Fontainebleau, 5 août 1711, in Recueil des Instructions données aux Ambassadeurs et Ministres de France depuis les Traités de Westphalie jusqu'à la Révolution française, vol. XII: "Spain", with an introduction and notes by A. Morel-Fatio and H. Léonardon, volume two (1701-1722). by the Ministère des Affaires étrangères, p. 202. [Although these comments are nearly a century old, it is fair to say that the somewhat overly paternalistic interest that the French took in Spain and the Spaniards made them relevant at the beginning of the First Empire.

Gravina and Rear Admiral Magon led the Tactical Reserve of 12 ships.

Nelson's genius was to create local numerical superiority in the various sectors of attack, despite his overall numerical inferiority[113].

Strategically speaking, the naval theorist Castex coldly notes that: "Trafalgar settled the question of the invasion of England. It has already been pointed out that this place was not located on the English coast, and that this battle had nevertheless protected it perfectly and definitively. The conclusion is obvious, classic even, and there is no need to insist on it[114].

Summary of the action: On the 20th, at 6:00 p.m., the English fleet was reported "windward". At 7:00 a.m. on the 21st, Nelson was only about twenty kilometers from the Franco-Spaniards, with a tail wind but very light, and the swell had increased. Admiral Villeneuve decided to put himself in the line of battle. For lack of wind or for any other reason [political], he was not well obeyed.

At about 8:00 a.m., Villeneuve ordered to turn around and sail north. The disorder was thus aggravated because of the lack of wind, which did not allow for precise maneuvering; and when the English approached, around noon, the allied line was in an arc, concave towards the enemy. The two English columns attacked perpendicularly; all sails out to catch the slightest breath of this weak breeze. Despite the requests of several officers who did not want their admiral to expose his life, Nelson led the northern column in his VICTORY. This was to cost him his life.

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[113] The Chinese, again two millennia ahead of the Europeans, advocated this tactic: "[...] I can use the totality of my forces to attack a fraction of his", SunTzu, *The Art of War,* [chap. 6, Principle 31, p, 137]. Carl von Clausewitz. himself believed that, "when absolute preponderance cannot be attained, there remains only the securing of relative preponderance at the decisive points, by a judicious use of forces." [On War, chap. VIII, p. 205]. See *in fine*.

[114] "*Théories stratégiques*", Admiral Raoul Castex, Société d'édition géographique, maritime et coloniale, Paris, 1929. p. 174.

It was the Southern column, commanded by Collingwood[115], that was the first to engage in combat. Nelson arrived in contact 15 minutes later. Not knowing where Villeneuve was, who did not show his flag until the last moment, The VICTORY headed for the largest enemy ship, a huge four-decker, Le SANTISSIMA-TRINIDAD, 10th ship of the line. Then he hesitated and launched himself into the crenel behind Le BUCENTAURE, Villeneuve's flagship which was following the Spanish ship. The ROYAL-SOVEREIGN, whose crew had laid down on the deck to let the storm pass, had launched itself on the SANTA-ANA [112 guns] and received a huge broadside which put sixty men out of action in a flash. Then, when she was within range, she returned a violent fire which killed or wounded[116] more than 200 Spaniards (according to English estimates not mentioned elsewhere) on the SANTA-ANA. The VICTORY 120 also engaged Le BUCENTAURE 80. Paradoxically, in a few moments, and despite the enormous difference in naval artillery (40 guns), The VICTORY was crippled of all her bonnets[117]", had a mast cut, a yardarm cut and 50 more men out of action.

At the Allied vanguard, Rear Admiral Dumanoir-Lepelley reported to the Wing Commander that he had no one to fight against. He asked for orders. In the turmoil of the battle, he did not receive an answer until two hours later, when it was almost too late. It was 1:30 p.m. when Dumanoir received the order to turn around and attack. But by then the breeze was so light that he had to be towed by his boats and arrived at the scene of the battle at 2:30 p.m., when the battle was lost.

The VICTORY 120 tried to infiltrate between Le BUCENTAURE 80 and Le REDOUTABLE 78. The former [BUCENTAURE]tried to prevent it and rushed against The

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[115] ●The ROYAL-SOVEREIGN.

[116] ●According to English historians. But such a number seems quite large for a single broadside, [see also the broadside of the English ship The TEMERAIRE against Le REDOUTABLE, still according to the same overly patriotic English historians].

[117] ●Small additional square sails, installed between the large ones to catch the slightest breath.

VICTORY which, to avoid the collision, had to change course so suddenly that, carried away by its momentum, it came up against The REDOUTABLE.

The two ships began to shoot at each other at close range and The VICTORY was beginning to suffer quite a bit when the English ship The TEMERAIRE 110 flew to her rescue and sent a destructive hail of grapeshot fire[118] on the French bridge, killing 200 men on the REDOUTABLE and saving The VICTORY. But by then it was too late for Nelson, whose magnificent parade uniform had drawn the fire of a French sniper perched on the REDOUTABLE's mast. At 1:30 p.m., he was mortally wounded by a bullet in the kidneys. The battle continued under Collingwood's command. Thus died one of the world's greatest sailors.

The Spanish MONARCA 74 was attacked at the same time by The BELLE-ISLE 74, The TONNANT 80, The BELLEROPHON 74 and The REVENGE 74. How could he have survived? Le MONARCA died at 1:50 p.m. Shortly thereafter, Le SANTA-ANA 112 was facing two English ships with many more guns: The ROYAL SOVEREIGN 120 and The BELLE-ISLE 74. At 2:15 p.m., Le SANTA-ANA had to show its flag after a fierce fight. Then it was Le FOUGUEUX 74, which had come to help Le SANTA-ANA 112 and which had had to fight successively against The ROYAL-SGVEREIGN 120, The MARS 74, The TONNANT 80 and, finally, The TEMERAIRE 110 which gave Le FOUGUEUX the *coup de grâce*. Covered with dead bodies, it was boarded by The TEMERAIRE and had to bow, L'ALGESIRAS was burned. L'AIGLE, reduced to a floating pontoon after a furious fight with The DEFIANCE 74. Le BUCENTAURE 80 and Le SANTISSIMA-TRINIDAD 130 fought together against a multitude of English ships.

When Villeneuve saw that his ship was becoming ungovernable, he moved to another ship to continue the fight, leaving

[118] ●In English: *grapeshot* or *shrapnel*; In French: *mitraille antipersonnel*, biscayen, *obus canister, obus à balles, boîte-à-mitraille.*

Le BUCENTAURE in the hands of The CONQUEROR. L'ACHILLE 74 was successively cannonaded for two hours by The BELLE-ISLE 74, The POLYPHEMUS 64, The DEFIANCE 74 and The SWIFTSURE 74, then by The ACHILLES 74 [British], which L'ACHILLE 74 [French] succeeded in destroying. The PRINCE 110 then joined the slaughter, and a huge fire broke out on board L'ACHILLE [French]. Soon, at 5:30 p.m., the latter blew up, flag high, engulfing with itself 480 men; 36 drowned. The English ships put rowboats to sea to rescue the survivors.

The Spaniards also lost successively the SAN-JUAN-NEPOMUCENO, the BAHAMA, the ARGONAUTA, the SAN-ILDEFONSO, the SAN-AUGUSTINO; and, finally, the NEPTUNO, at 5:15 a.m., at the end of the battle.

The battle had just ended, as the sea was becoming dangerously rough. All the ships of the three squadrons were largely dismasted. *The local strategic numerical superiority had had its miraculous effect*. Unfortunately, the brilliant Nelson was no longer there to enjoy his victory. No English ship had surrendered, but 7 French and 12 Spanish ships, attacked by the English, more numerous thanks to the genius of Nelson[119], had succumbed. The remainder of the Franco-Spanish fleet[120] 12 withdrew towards Cadiz under the command of the lieutenant-general Gravina with his PRINCIPE-DE-ASTU RIAS. Four French ships of Dumanoir's vanguard had hardly participated in the battle. Collingwood had to abandon his flagship ROYAL-SOVEREIGN, which was too badly damaged, and had it taken in tow by the frigate EURYALUS, which became his flagship.

Soon, the storm broke. The sea had really decided to take back from the victor's part of their booty. All night long, the English fleet, which had taken in tow its cumbersome catch, had to fight against the elements, aided by the French prisoners who had been freed for the circumstance. In the storm, the English

[119] ●And to the lack of initiative of Dumanoir-Lepelley.
[120] ●Nine French and Spanish ships.

lost many of their catches; Le REDOUTABLE sank the following day with its English crew of 156 men, while The SWIFTSURE [English] was in tow. Le FOUGUEUX was rushed to the coast and only 120 men were saved.

Seeing the English in precarious situation, impeded and encumbered by prisoners and prizes, Le PLUTON 74 sailed out of Cadiz on the morning of the 22nd, along with three other French ships, two Spaniards and a few frigates, to *recapture* several of their prizes. Thus were recovered the enormous SANTA-ANA 112 and Le NEPTUNO 80.

The ALGESIRAS was governed by a crew of 50 men, not enough to keep 270 French sailors prisoner in its hold. The ship was heading irresistibly toward the rocky coast and certain death when the English commander summoned the leader of the prisoners, Lieutenant de La Bretonnière, and offered to free his men to help with the maneuver. The Frenchman accepted, but declared that he would consider himself released. It was take it or leave it. To save the lives of his men, the English captain accepted and the 270 Frenchmen took the helm of the ship which succeeded, not without difficulty, in returning to port with the 50 Englishmen, prisoners but... alive! Le BUCENTAURE, released by The CONQUEROR, also took its English crew and their ship prisoner, but the warship was lost on the reefs of San Sebastian Point. L'INDOMPTABLE took 500 men from Le BUCENTAURE. L'AIGLE was abandoned by its English prize crew and managed to run aground without much trouble.

When Collingwood saw that he would not be able to keep all his catches, he had the huge SANTISSIMA-TRINIDAD, L'ARGONAUTA, L'INTRÉPIDE and El SAN-AGUSTINO burned.

Losses & Casualties ●*Royal Navy*: Admiral Nelson was killed, which represented an irreparable strategic loss for England. According to English sources, the English lost 1,587 men killed or wounded, which seems ludicrously underestimated for the violence and length of the battle. ●*Marine Impériale and Spanish*:

Le REDOUTABLE alone, which with its 78 guns underwent a two-hour battle with the 120-gun VICTORY; it had 522 men out of a crew of 643. The losses were enormous on the French side: 17 Franco-Spanish ships were initially taken by the English, and an eighteenth burned by accident while still resisting. In fact, the English were able to keep only one single French ship [Le SWTFTSURE][121] and three Spanish ships [BAHAMA, SAN-ILDEFONSO and SAN-JUAN-NEPOMUCENO]. All the others sank the same evening or the next day due to damage or were taken back from the English by the Franco-Spaniards, who took advantage of the storm that followed the battle. The human losses were very important, around 2,200 killed and 1,100 wounded (French); and 1,000 killed and 1,300 wounded (Spanish).

Consequence of this Franco-Spanish defeat: *Any danger of a French invasion of England was definitely over*. Napoleon was in Austria when he learned of the defeat of his fleet at Trafalgar. He entered into a memorable rage. Some said that he spoke of imitating for his admirals the conduct of England towards Admiral Byng: court-martial and death. Admiral Villeneuve remained a prisoner in England until April 1806, when he made the mistake of returning to France. He was found on April 21st, 1806, in his hotel room in Rennes, pierced with several stab wounds. Curiously, in spite of the multiplicity of mortal blows, the Imperial Police had the nerve to speak of suicide. Napoléon had refused to grant him an audience.

Sources & Readings ●The Sailors of the Republic. Le VENGEUR and le DROIT-DE-L'HOMME. Le LOIRE and La BAYONNAISE. Le Treize Prairial; Aboukir and Trafalgar, H, Moulin, Paris, 1882. ●*Trafalgar: The Nelson Touch*, David Howarth, Moreton-in-Marsh, Windrush Press, 1997. ●*Trafalgar: Countdown to Battle,* 1803-1805, Alan Schom, New York, Atheneum, 1990. ●*Ulm, Trafalgar, Austerlitz*, Jean Thiry, Paris, Berger-Levrault, 1962. ●*A Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving to Almighty God; to be used in ail Churches and Chapels*

[121] ●Which was, by the way, an English capture, as we have already mentioned.

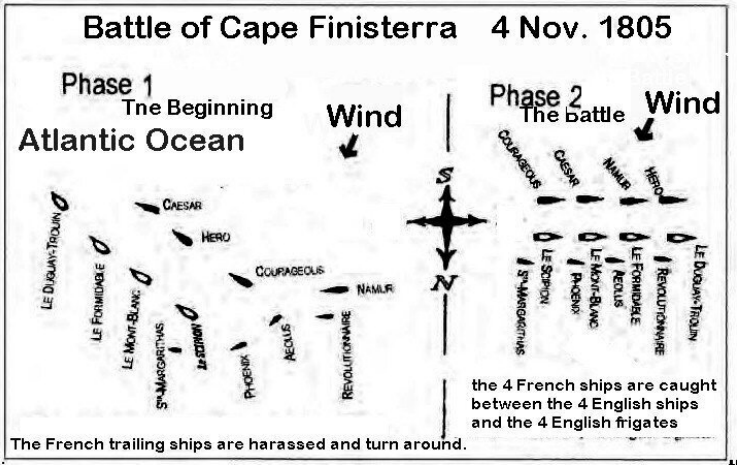
[...] on Thursday the Fifth Day of December 1805, being the Day appointed [...] *for a General Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the late signal and important Victory obtained by His Majesty's Ships of War, under the Command of the late Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, over the combined Fleets of France and Spain*, George Eyre & Andrew Strahan, London, 1805.

Naval battle of Cape Finisterre.

Date of the action: November 4th, 1805.

Location: Cape located in Spanish Galicia in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula. Geographical coordinates: 42° 53' North and 01° 02' West.

Conflict: Wars of the Napoleonic Empire [18th May 1804 -1814 and 1815]. Third Coalition, from April 8th, 1805 to the Treaty of Presburg, December 26th, 1805.



Context: On November 2nd, the ships of Rear Admiral Dumanoir-Lepelley were spotted by two English frigates belonging to Commodore Sir Richard Strachan's squadron, which was cruising in these waters with the aim of intercepting Rochefort's squadron[122]. Seeing that the Dumanoir's division was weaker, Strachan immediately launched himself in his wake. The bright

[122] ●Captain Allemand.

moonlight prevented the latter from deceiving the English by changing course. On the morning of the 3rd, the enemy squadrons were in sight of each other at a much closer distance than the day before. The whole day was spent in pursuit and the following night, the moonlight still favored the English squadron of 8 warships (including 5 big ship-of-the-line and 4 frigates) in their pursuit of the 4 French men-of-war.

Military leaders in command ●Marine Impériale: rear-admiral Dumanoir. ●Royal Navy: commodore Stracham.

Military Forces involved[123]:

Marine Impériale
1-Le DUGUAY-TROUIN 74, Rear-Adm.Dumanoir. **2-**Le FORMIDABLE 80[124], Capt. Letellier. **3-**Le MONT-BLANC 74, Capt. Le Villegris. **4-**Le SCIPION 74 guns, Capt Bellanger.

Royal Navy
1-The CAESAR 80 guns, commodore Strachan. **2-**The HERO 74, Capt. Gardner. **3-**The COURAGEOUS 74, Capt. Richard Lee. **4-**The NAMUR 74, Capt. Halstel. **5-**The BELLONA 74, Capt. Dudley-Pater. *Frigates*: The SANTA-MARGARITA 36, The EOLUS 32, The PHŒNIX 36, The REVOLUTIONAIRE[125] 38.

Strategy or tactics: Pincer attack of 4 French ships by a pack of several English warships including 5 ships-of-the-line. Nelson's influence was increasing. Not satisfied with his double superiority, Strachan tried to obtain local superiority by concentrating his 4 ships of the line and his 5 large frigates on the last two French ships.

Summary of the Action: At dawn on the 4th, the English, with 4 ships and 5 frigates, were only three guns ranges away from the French. Dumanoir had arranged his ships in a chessboard

[123] ●Clowes Vol.5 p.170.
[124] ●Le FORMIDABLE had but 65 guns since Trafalgar
[125] ●A French prize, needless to say.

line so that they would be in line of battle as soon as they turned around. At 8:00 a.m., two frigates began to harass them by firing a few shots from their guns. Soon, the superiority of the frigates allowed them to come abeam from time to time and to fire one or two full broadsides at the French ships, which could only retaliate with their cannons. These maneuvers, which resulted in damaging and destroying the French ships in detail, lasted until 11:30 am. At that hour, however, Rear Admiral Dumanoir finally decided to form his battle line.

Meanwhile, another frigate had joined and was closely followed by three ships-of-the-line. These seven ships attacked the French line in such a way as to envelop the last two ships. In order not to let his rear be crushed, Dumanoir turned his squadron windward by the counter march [successively]. This movement caused Le DUGUAY-TROUIN to come under fire from the three English ships. He retaliated vigorously, overtook the English ships-of-the-line and forced the three English frigates to move aside. They let it happen to take position under the wind of the French line which had completed its evolution. The three English warships then turned to establish themselves on the same side as the French squadron. The English warship The NAMUR and the frigate The REVOLUTIONAIRE joined the English squadron at this moment. Each French ship was thus caught between a frigate and an English ship-of-the-line.

Forced to fight on both sides, the French ships, although damaged in the battle of Trafalgar, fought with obstinacy. The English frigates quickly changed position in order not to be sunk by the French and positioned themselves so as not to be exposed to all their fire, on the hips.

The battle continued without interruption for four and a half hours. The French warships were in a lamentable state, almost completely dismasted, and had embarked 2.5 m of water in their hold. Le FORMIDABLE brought up its flag, followed soon (a quarter of an hour later) by Le SCIPION, Le MONT-BLANC and Le DUGUAY-TROUIN.

Casualties & Losses ●*Royal Navy*: 600 killed[126]. ●*Marine Imperial*: Le FORMIDABLE had more than 200 men out of action, Le SCIPION 200 men, Le MONT-BLANC 180, Le DUGUAY-TROUIN 150.

Consequence of this French defeat: Direct continuation of Trafalgar, this defeat came to aggravate the consequences for the French.

Sources & Readings ●Reminiscences of a naval officer; a quarter-deck view of the war against Napoléon, Captain Abraham Crawford, Chatham Publications, London, 1999. ●Memoirs of Sailors on the First Empire, authors: gunner Guillain, captain Braquant, capitaine de vaisseau Gicquel, Librairie historique F. Teissèdre, Paris (Che-Midi): 1998. ●Souvenirs d'un amiral, première partie, publiés d'après les Mémoires du Vice-Amiral Pierre Jurien de la Gravière (1772-1849), par le Vice-Amiral Edmond Jurien de La Graviere, Association des amis du Musée de la Marine, Paris, 1977. ●Les Marins de Napoléon, Auguste Thomazi, J. Tallandier, Paris, 1978.

[126] ●Strachan officially reported casualties of only 135 men in order to give his four-hour-and-thirty-minute battle even more panache. But 135 killed after 4h30 of hard fighting is unlikely, unless you hide.

Naval Battle of Santo Domingo.

Date of action: February 6th, 1806.

Location: Santo Domingo, Greater Antilles. Approximate geographical coordinates: 18° 28' North latitude and 69° 54' West longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the French Napoleonic Empire [18th May 1804 - 1814 and 1815]- The Fourth Coalition did not begin until September 1806 and lasted until the Treaty of July 9th, 1807.

Background: A French squadron left Brest on 13th December 1805 and, despite damage caused by severe storms, arrived in sight of Santo Domingo on 22nd January 1806. It began by landing troops and equipment for General Ferrand and repaired the damage caused to its ships. On the morning of 6th February, while repairs were not completed, the corvette La DILIGENTE, placed under surveillance near the island of Savana, reported the approach of the English. The admiral gave the order to get ready for combat. But last maneuver dragged on and it was 7th o'clock when the last one set sail. The English squadron that appeared was 11 warships including 7 ships-of-the-line.

Military leaders in command ●*Royal Navy*: Admirals Suckworth, Cochrane and Louis. ●*Marine Impériale*: Rear-Admiral Leissègues.

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: 11 warships including 7 ships-of-the-line among which could be seen the command flags of Captain John Duckworth; Contre-Admiral Cochrane and Contre-Admiral T. Louis. ●*Marine Impériale*: 5 ships-of-the-à-line, 2 frigates and a corvette: L'IMPERIAL[127]].

Strategy or tactics: The French admiral had planned to put the head of the English line between two fires and crush it before it

[127] ●Tree-Deck vessel of 130 guns, Captain Bigot, bearing the mark of Contre-Admiral Leissègues. But this giant with the foot of clay had a shell too thin.

could be rescued. It failed because of the disproportion of forces and the illusory power of the IMPERIAL, whose hull was too fragile. The defeat at Cape Trafalgar continued to affect the French psychologically.

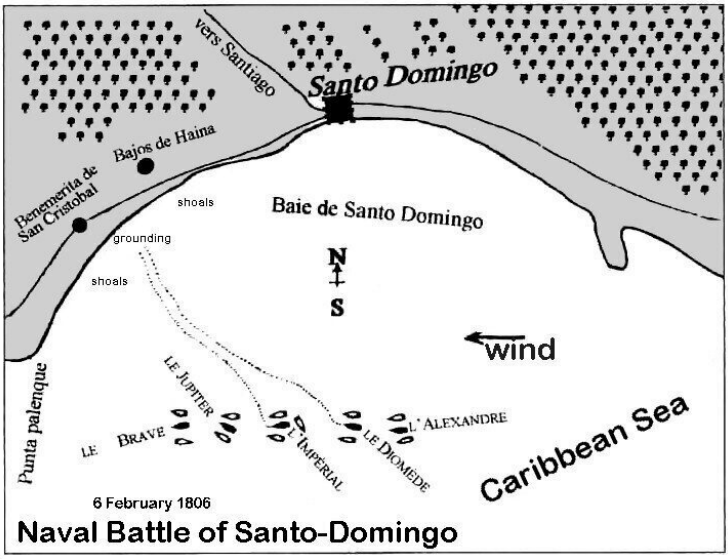
Battle of Santo Domingo	
ROYAL NAVY	**MARINE IMPÉRIALE**
1-AGAMEMNON 64, Capt Edgard Berry 2-SUPERB 74, (Capt. John Duckworth), 3-NORTHUMBERLAND 74, [R/Adm. Cochrane], 4- SPENCER 74, [Captain R. Stopford], 5-CANOPUS, 80, Rear-Admiral T. Louis 6-DONEGAL 74, Capt Pulteney Malcolm 7-ATLAS 74, Captain Samuel Pym	1- L'IMPERIAL 130 R/A Leissègues 2- Le DIOMÈDE 74, Captain Hemi 3- Le JUPITER 74, Captain Leignel 4- Le BRAVE 74, Captain Coudé 5- L'ALEXANDRE 74, Capt. Garreau
Frigates	**Frigates**: FÉLICITÉ 40, DILIGENTE 20.

Action Summary: At 9:00 a.m., the battle began. The French squadron was then about 14 km west-southwest of Santo Domingo. The numerical superiority of the English ships gave them a great advantage over those of Rear-Admiral Leissègues; They took advantage of it. After some manoeuvres during which the French admiral failed in his intention to put the head of the English line between two fires and crush it before it could be rescued, four English ships set out to fight, each one of the four French ships of 74 guns, while the other three threw themselves on L'IMPÉRIAL. This ship, the most powerful in artillery that had been built up to that time on all the seas of globe[128], vigorously supported this triple attack[129]. But the lack of solidity of his hullwall, which the cannonballs crossed even at the level of the low battery, meant that he had a part of his crew out of action and quantity of guns dismantled. He thus lost the advantage he had over the small ships of 74 guns.

[128] ●With the exception of the Spanish SANTISSIMA-TRINIDAD, a gigantic four-deck of 130 guns that fought at Trafalgar.

[129] ●In fact, with its 130 guns, it had to face 222 English guns. One always finds one's master; just as in 1941, the powerful BISMARCK – brand new – which had sunk the HOOD on a single broadside, was itself executed shortly afterwards by a huge English squadron who wanted to avenge the HOOD.

For their part, Le BRAVE and Le JUPITER succumbed first after desperate resistance. They brought their flags while they still had all their masts standing. For Le BRAVE, the cause was that Captain Coudé and several other officers were put out of action and a young sailor simply brought the flag. The causes of the surrender of Le JUPITER are not known. L'ALEXANDRE held its position in front of L'IMPÉRIAL for a long time



and fought furiously, but when it had all its masts downwind, it drifted *downwind* of the line and no frigate was available to give it a tow. In fact, the two French frigates had moved away from the hell of the battlefield without having received authorization from the French Admiral. Le DIOMÈDE, aft sailor of the Admiral[130], acquired the greatest honor by the manner in which he defended himself, while he was attacked by several English ships, after Le BRAVE, Le JUPITER and L'ALEXANDRE had brought their flag.

By 10:30 a.m., the 18-pounder battery of L'IMPÉRIAL was completely helpless. An hour later, its 24-pounder battery was also destroyed. Reduced to its battery of 36-pounders, this

[130] ●That is to say, he followed the admiral-ship to guard its rear.

warship kept responding vigorously to the fire of the English warships that surrounded it, to the number of four. At 11:30 a.m. the mainmast and the mizzenmast of L'IMPÉRIAL came crashing down. He had thus lost the means of maneuvering to present successively the traversal to the English ships which were fighting it. As a result, the English were able to take and retain the most advantageous positions to cannon him and reduce him by his *blind* spots [not equipped with artillery ports].

Already 500 men of the crew of L'IMPÉRIAL were *hors de combat* [dead or wounded]. The captain and the second in command were seriously wounded. The admiral's two Second Officers had been killed at his side, and only one Ensign remained with him. In such a situation, Rear-Admiral Leissègues[131], determined to die fighting, continued to stand on the quarterdeck of the IMPÉRIAL, encouraging the crew to fight to the last breath. The loss of three of his ships, the desperate state of the one he was riding, nothing seemed to shake his determination to fight. Resolute to sink rather than bring his flag down, he returned the sharpest fire of all the artillery that the enemy cannonballs had not detected and destroyed.

However, humanity ordered him to spare the rest of this crew whom he ordered to perform his own *baroud of honor* (his own Last Stand) as an officer. And he decided on a maneuver which seemed to him to fulfill this purpose and prevent his ship from falling into the hands of the English: he ordered to direct L'IMPÉRIAL to the coast and to emboss him there. But all the cables had been cut by the enemy cannonballs and there was no other resources left than to run the ship aground. The Admiral gave his orders. At 12:15, L'IMPÉRIAL made landfall, showing its starboard battery side to the open sea. The DIOMÈDE imitated the maneuver and ran aground a cable [200 meters] behind L'IMPÉRIAL.

The ships of the English squadron feared stranding themselves by getting too close to these two ships, moved away from

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[131] ●The rank of rear admiral (contre-amiral) is immediately lower than that of vice-admiral. It corresponds to the rank of Brigadier General in the Army.

the coast, taking with them Le BRAVE, Le JUPITER and L'ALEXANDRE.

The coast on which L'IMPÉRIAL and Le DIOMEDE ran aground was bristling with rocks. These two vessels were promptly smashed. All hope of saving them being lost, there was no other course but to burn them as soon as they could be evacuated. The state of the coast, the bad weather, and the precautions required to transport the wounded, which were landed first, delayed the fire. On February 9th, three days after the battle, it was not yet completed, and this circumstance saved the French admiral from having to burn his two ships by himself. In the evening, several English ships approached the coast and fired a few broadsides on L'IMPÉRIAL and Le DIOMÈDE. They then put their boats to the sea, boarded the two French ships and set them on fire under the very eyes of Rear-Admiral Leissègues, after having taken prisoner the staff and a hundred men of the crew of Le DIOMEDE who were still on board their ship.

Casualties & Losses ●Unknown, but quite heavy on both sides, particularly on the French side.

Consequence of this French defeat: This defeat aggravated the already heavy French toll on Trafalgar, materially and psychologically.

Sources & Readings ● Dissertation on the disease which the doctors of Santo Domingo have called *Yellow Fever* or *Siam Fever*, CFJ Bertaud, Paris, 1804. ●The Life of Thomas, Lord Cochrane, Tenth Earl of Dundonald, G. C. B. Admiral of the Red, Rear-Admiral of the Fleet, etc., completing «The autobiography of a seaman», Thomas Fundonald, Eleventh Earl of and H. R. Fox Bourne, eds. Bourne. H. R Fox, Richard Bentley [London], 1869. ●La République dominicaine, la Guadeloupe et la Caraïbe, edited by Michel L. Martin, François Vellas and Alain Yacou, Centre de recherches caraïbéennes, Paris, Economica, 1992. ●Perish the colonies rather than a principle! Contributions à l'histoire de l'abolition de l'esclavage, 1789-1804,

edited by Florence Gauthier, Paris, Société des études robespierristes, 2002.

Naval Battle of Roses.

Date of action: October 22nd, 1809.

Location: Off the coast of the town of Roses [Roses in Catalan; Rosas in Spanish]; on the Spanish Costa Brava of Catalonia. Geographic coordinates: 42° 10' N & 03° 15' E.

Conflict: Wars of the Napoleonic European Empire [18th May 1804 - 1814 and 1815]. Peninsular War. Campaign of 1809 in Catalonia.

Background: On October 21st, Rear-Admiral Baudin, left Toulon for Barcelona with an easterly wind. Captain Robert Barrie discovered his enemy an hour or two later, and, making sail to the WSW, fell in, at 9:00 pm on the following day, with Lord Collingwood, off the Catalonia coast.

A French squadron[132], left the harbor of Toulon with a convoy of 20 logistic transports loaded with munitions of war and mouth for the French Army in Spain, as well as conscripts intended to make up for the losses[133].

Military leaders in command ●*English*: Lord Collingwood. ●*French*: Rear-Admiral Baudin.

Military Forces involved ●*Marine Impériale*: escort of 3 ships-of-the-line with two frigates. ●*Royal Navy*: 6 ships of the line and frigates unknown.

Strategy or tactics: While the escort blocked the way for the English squadron, the convoy continued on its way. The battle was linear.

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[132] Three ships of the line, two frigates.

[133] Jean-Marie Vianney, who became the holy Curé d'Ars, was mobilized at this time and received his roadmap for the Army of Spain. But a *conscientious objector* before his time, he refused to go to war and went into hiding. Forty-five years later, upon learning that Napoleon III had named him *Knight of the Legion of Honor*, he commented with a smile: "I don't know why... unless it's because I was a draft dodger."

Naval Battle of Roses	
MARINE IMPÉRIALE	**ROYAL NAVY**
1-Le ROBUST 80, rear/admiral Baudin 2-Le BORÉE 74, Capt Gaspard Laignel, 3-Le LION 74, Capt. Eustache Bonami, Frigate: PAULINE, +armed transports and storeships, **228 guns** +80 from the frigates that did not normally fight in line	1-CANOPUS 80, r/adm George Martin 2-RENOWN 74, Calderwood Durham 3-TIGRE 74, Capt. Benjamin Hallowell 4-SULTAN 74, Capt Edward Griffith 5-LEVIATHAN 74, Capt. John Harvey 6-CUMBERLAND 74, Ph. Wodehouse 7-POMONE 40 **490 guns**

Summary of Action: The squadron was in sight of Lord Collingwood's fleet on 21st October off Roses and was attacked on the 22nd. At 3:00 p.m., Rear-Admiral Baudin, with his division of 3 ships-of-the-line and two frigates, separated from his convoy, which steered as fast as possible to the N.N.W., while Baudin made for the E.S.E., with a north-easterly wind. The three French ships managed to block the six English ships-of-the-line with a continuous cannonade, while the convoy fled on its way. That afternoon and evening, Captain Barrie, in the English frigate The POMONE 38, had to content himself with picking up 2 small transports and destroying one brig, and a ketch belonging to the convoy; but the rest got away. Their mission accomplished successfully, the 3 men-of-war and the frigate soon disappeared in the other direction. So the rest of the logistics convoy entered the bay and then port of Roses as planned.

Casualties & Losses ●*French*: 2 transports and one brig. ●*English*: unknown. Probably a few killed.

Consequence of this British setback: The convoy managed to pass and the French army of Spain was supplied.

Sources & Readings ●The Life of Admiral Lord Nelson, K.B., from His Lordship's Manuscripts, (Memoir of Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy. Memoir of Cuthbert Lord Collingwood.), James Stanier Clarke «John MacHarthur LLD,, 3 vol., Fisher, Son & Co, London, 1840, ●A Selection from the Public and Private Correspondence of'Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood;

interspersed with memoirs of his life, by G. L. Newnham Collingwood, James Ridgway, London, 1828. ●*The Private Correspondence of Admiral Lord Collingwood*. By Edward Hughes, Publications of the Navy Records Society, vol. 98, London, 1957. ●*Life of' Lord Collingwood*, by his son-in-law, Ed. James Burns, London, 1842. ●The Life of Admiral Lord Collingwood, by W. Clark Russell, Public. Methuen, London, 1895. ●*Histoire Maritime de France*, Léon Guérin, Chez Abel Ledoux, Éditeur, Paris, 1843 ●*Batailles navales de la France*, Onésime Troude, Challamel Ainé Éditeur, Paris, 1867. 4 Volumes. ●William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy, in Six Volumes, vol. V. Sampson Low, Marston & Co. 1900, London.

Naval Battle off Port-Impérial.

Date of action: August 20th-24th, 1810.

Location: In the south-east of the island of France or Mauritius is Port-Sud-Est, also called *Port-Bourbon*, *Grand-Port* or *Port Impérial*[134], in 1810, under the Napoleonic Empire. *Vieux Grand Port* today. Port-Louis[135] or Port-Nord-Ouest is located in the northwest of Mauritius. Port-Louis geographical coordinates: 20° 10' south latitude and 57° 30' east longitude.

Conflict: Wars of the Napoleonic Empire [18th May 1804 - 1814 and 1815]. Campaign of 1810 in the Indian Ocean.

Background: Lieutenant-Colonel Keating had a view of attacking the Isle-de-la-Passe, a small island off Grand-Port on the south-east side of The Isle-de-France (Mauritius), which was intended to be use as a base for political agitation as well as for military operation in this French colony.

Military leaders in command ●*Marine Impériale*: Commander Dupéré; Commander Bouvet; then Commander Hamelin, ●*Royal Navy*: Captain Pym; Captain Willoughby.

Military Forces involved ●*Royal Navy*: frigates and the coastal batteries. Towards the end of July, in addition to the SIRIUS 36 (Captain Samuel Pym), the IPHIGENIA 36 (Captain Henry Lambert), the NEREID 36 (Captain Nisbet Josiah Willoughby), and The STAUNCH 14 (Lieutenant Benjamin Street), cruised off Mauritius. In the NEREIDE were 12 Madras artillerymen, 50 grenadiers of the 69th Regiment, and 50 men from the 33rd Regiment, the whole under Captain Todd of the 69 Regiment[136] ●*Marine Impériale*: frigates La MINERVE and La BELLONE; indiaman [merchant vessel]: Le CEYLON; *corvette* Le VICTOR."

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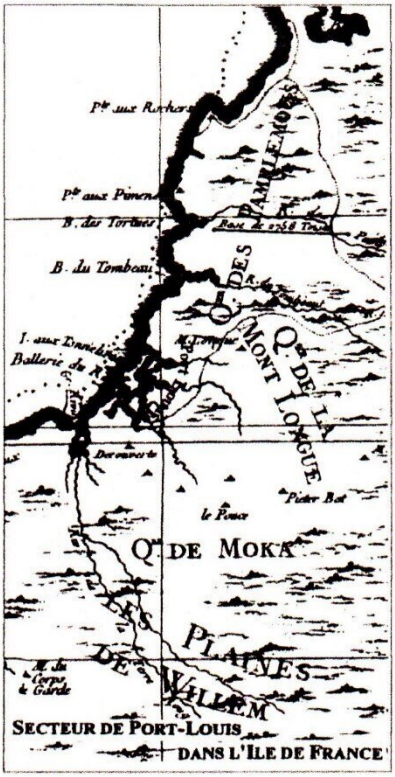
[134] ●Port-Jmpérial was located at 20° 37399' south latitude and 57° 71965' east longitude. Île-de-la-Passe : -20.39898, 57.76755.
[135] ●Port-Louis was called Port-Napoléon under the Napoleonic Empire.
[136] ●According to William Clowes, Vol V, pp. 463 ff.

Strategy or Tactics. Cunning on the part of the English who let the French tricolor float to create a mousetrap. *Strategically* speaking, the Napoleonic Empire (after Trafalgar) was a period when the Marine Impériale was almost absent. "Reassured as far as our squadrons were concerned after Trafalgar, the English were able to give in the second part of the struggle an energetic impetus to their operations targeting French colonies and those of French allies [the Dutch and the Spanish].



The Cape was taken in 1806. In 1809, it was the turn of Martinique, Guyana, Sénégal, Rodrigue Island, Guadeloupe, La Réunion and the Île-de-France [Mauritius] succumbed in 1810. Java was conquered in 1811. In South America, England recorded failures in Chile in 1806, La Plata in 1806 and 1807. Apart from these, the harvest secured by the pre-eminence of naval force covers the entire world[137]." In fact, England let her European allies [Austria, Prussia, Russia...], subsidized by its gold guineas, tie the hands of the French on the European continent, while the Royal Navy, free from all opposition, could freely seize French trading posts around the world[138]. Strategy directly initiated by the powerful London

[137] ●"*Strategic theories*", Admiral Raoul Castex, Société of geographical, maritime and colonial publishing, Paris, 1929, p. 176.
[138] ●That is to say, colonies.

Merchant Lobbies. Needless to say that, if in 1805 Napoléon had been able to see beyond the invasion of England which obsessed him, he would have studiously avoided risking his deep-sea forces and the French Empire as well as the Spanish naval forces in a single battle[139].

According to some English leaders, L'Isle-de-la-Passe was the key to capturing the whole of Isle-de-France. A strategic islet, Isle-de-La-Passe, stood in front of the Mauritian harbour of Port-Impérial. The English had occupied it, improvised and used it as a base of attack to launch raids on the south-east coast of Île-de-France[140]. The first operation was launched on the isolated battery of Pointe-du-Diable, which was attacked by surprise. The commander and three French soldiers were killed and three gunners taken prisoner; the number of Englishmen killed is unknown. The cannons were nailed, and the powder magazine destroyed. After which Willoughby *picked up* [retreated]. He later moved to Grand-Port or *Port-Bourbon*. He kept his foot on the great land until sunset then, seeing that French troops were going to attack him, he withdrew to the Isle-de-la-Passe. On another occasion he came upon and destroyed by surprise the Chappe telegraph of Grande-Rivière station; then he went to the Pointe-du-Diable to blow up what was left after the last raid.

On August 10th, 1810, having left Captain Lambert of the Royal Navy, in The IPHIGENIA, off Port-Louis, on the west coast of Isle-de-France, English Captain Pym, with the other vessels, proceeded off Grand-Port. That evening, in terrible weather, they tried a landing on *Île-de-la-Passe*. The boat, however, lost its way in the meanders of the Shoals[141]. The attempt had to be abandoned.

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[139] ●In fact, he did not want it. Villeneuve attacked without asking permission and ruined all his chances.

[140] ●Which served as a base for French privateers and cruises that destroyed the English trade in the Indian Ocean.

[141] ●The French had removed the navigational beacons to confuse the British.

On the following morning (11th), Captain Pym assembled his men, and, to lull suspicion, bore away and rejoined Lambert off Port-Louis… The SIRIUS reappeared before Isle-de-la Passe on August 13th, when the other ships were still far to leeward. Anxious to create a surprise, Pym decided not to wait for his consorts, and in the evening sent in 5 light boats, containing 71 men. The attack was successful, although the French opened fire before the boats had landed. The English just carried a battery in spite of a determined resistance. The French garrison of about 80 regulars, taken by surprised, was captured, having inflicted a loss of 7 killed and 18 wounded to the English.

ROYAL NAVY	MARINE IMPÉRIALE
The NEREID 42, # Captain Willoughby The SIRIUS 36, Captain Pym The MAGICIENNE36, #, The IPHIGENIA 36 Captain Lambert The STAUNCH 14 Lieutenant Street.	La MINERVE* 40 La BELLONE* 40; indiaman[142] Le CEYLON* 10 indiaman Le VICTOR* 16 *corvette** Le WINDHAM* 10, indiaman
#Captured from the French	**Captured from the English*

On the following morning (August 14th), The NEREID 36 and The STAUNCH 14 arrived, and Captain Pym, giving charge of Île-de-la-Passe to Captain Willougby, sailed to rejoin The IPHIGENIA 36 off Port Louis. Willoughby garrisoned the Isle-de-la-Passe with 50 of his grenadiers under Captain Todd. Over the next few days, Captain Willoughby made several night attacks at different points on the French island, by surprise, for probing defenses; but without success. The French were on their guard.

Summary of the action: On August 20th, 1810, the entire situation, until then apparently so favorable for speedy conquest of the Isle-de-France, was suddenly changed when a French squadron, La BELLONE 40 (Commodore Duperré), La

[142] ●*East Indiaman*, large sailing vessel of the type built from the 16th to the 19th century for the trade between Europe and southern Asia. The first were Portuguese and Dutch; English Indiamen appeared late in the 16th century and eventually came to dominate the trade. The ships varied in size from about 400 to 1,500 tons and more; often they were larger than contemporary men-of-war. They were three-masted and invariably well-armed for protection against piracy. [source: *Encyclopedia Britannica*] Armament between 8 to 18 guns and more.

MINERVE 40 (Captain Bouvet[143]), and Le VICTOR 16 (Commander Morice) with two Indiamen Le WINDHAM and Le CEYLON[144] were sighted in the offing. In fact, those five French ships were reported in sight of Port-Bourbon, in the southeast, called the Grand-Port. Soon after, the lookouts saw that it was the French division Dupéré. Those French were returning from a cruise and dragged two Indiamen ships of the British East India Company, The CEYLON and The WINDHAM, captured on 3rd July after a fierce fight. Another Englishman, The ASTELL, had fled although his captain had brought his flag on the evening of the battle[145].

To give confidence to the oncoming French squadron, Captain Willoughby set a trap by substituting British for French colors. *Captain Willoughby hoisted French colors, and, by means of the signal-book which he had stolen in the colony, he* induced the headmost of the French newcomers to enter Grand-Port.

The leading French ship was a tiny corvette, Le VICTOR 16 guns. The English suddenly poured so heavy a broadside into the little VICTOR, that it instantly stranded, and anchored on his starboard quarter. But when La MINERVE 40, followed by Le CEYLON, entered soon afterwards, they ordered Le VICTOR to cut its cable. The VICTOR dit it and rejoined its consorts. Both The NEREID 36 and the fort on Isle-de-la-Passe fired at the advancing French; but an accidental explosion in the fort or a shot on target in the powder magazine, put a number of British soldiers of the fort-garrison out of action, and six of the guns were quickly dismounted by the French broadsides. Then the rowboats from the frigate, loaded with 160 English soldiers of the garrison, hurried back to their frigates.

At 4:00 p.m., Captain Willoughby sent Lieutenant Deacon, to inform Captain Pym, off Port Louis, of the arrival of the French. The NEREID 36, which was then to seaward of the

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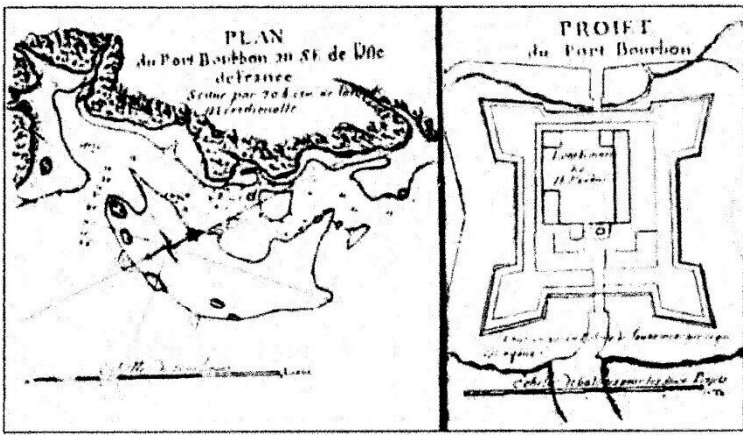
143 ●Captain Pierre François Henri Bouvet de Maisonneuve.
144 ●An English capture.
145 ●French negotiators subsequently tried to get the ship handed over that had violated the laws of war, but London refused to comply.

French, could have herself weighed and joined The SIRIUS; but its captain had been ordered to protect the Isle-de-la-Passe, and, perhaps he decided to do so *as long as possible*. *His subsequent defense of his charge (in England) was certainly one of the most remarkable on record,* says Clowes.



ANOTHER VERSION OF THE ATTACK ON PORT-IMPÉRIAL. On August 20th, the Duperré Division, composed of two frigates, La BELLONE, La MINERVE and the corvette Le VICTOR[146], approached Port-Impérial, escorting its recent catches The CEYLON and The WINDHAM. Dupéré then saw a frigate at anchor near the fortified islet [Isle-de-La Passe] defending the entrance. But he did not worry about it because he knew that, at that time, a frigate, La SÉMILLANTE, ceded to trade, could

[146] ●Le VICTOR was also an English capture, another conquest of Commander Dupéré in one of his previous cruises.

have arrived at the island of France and that thus the signals made to him must have been unknown, which explained the silence of this mute frigate.

Commander Bouvet was ordered to take the lead of the line and to make his way to the Grand-Port; corvette forward to illuminate the pass. It was immediately followed by The CEYLON. No sooner had the VICTOR arrived under the guns of the fortifications of the Île-de-La-Passe and those of the foreign frigate, than the French flag, which flew on these two points, gave way to the English flag. The crossfire of the fort and the frigate immediately forced the French corvette to lower its flag and obey the order "*to anchor on the field* " which was instructed by the English commander.

La MINERVE and Le CEYLON were then engaged in the pass and presented their forward to the English batteries. They received their fire without being able to retaliate. However, these two French ships did not suffer any major derailment during this intensive shelling. Captain Bouvet passed between the corvette Le VICTOR and the English frigate and ordered the corvette's capital to cut her cable and follow him, which he did. At the same time, La MINERVE sent its salvo at point-blank range into the hip of the English frigate and followed its way to the anchorage where the three ships[147] anchored. At about 14:00, La MINERVE had 23 men *hors de combat*. Commander Dupéré forced the entrance to the port and rallied the three ships already entered. The WINDHAM, whose captain did not dare

[147] ●La MINERVE, Le VICTOR and Le CEYLAN.

to follow the movement of La BELLONE, was taken the next day by an English cruise. This[148] consisted of four frigates, three of the first and one of the second rank. It was the latter who had taken the islet of the Pass, had put a garrison there and had embossed herself on this point, as we have just seen. It did not seem doubtful to Captains Dupéré and Bouvet that they would be attacked the next day by the four frigates together.

The port was open to the English and no external works existed to effectively protect the four French ships.

Commander Dupéré assembled his Council. Persuaded that the colony was about to be seriously attacked, and knowing that the captain-general had few troops at his disposal and that the frigates would be less useful to him for the defence than the men who mounted them, he inclined to advise to destroy these buildings and to form a corps of their crews to assemble them with the land forces.

Commander Bouvet did not give this opinion. Instead, he proposed waiting for the English in a position which he indicated, and resisted it to the last extremity, almost certain that the English fregat would not arrive on the French division without touching some sandbank from which the beacons would have been removed. Opinions thus divided, the two orders resolved to defer to the decision of the capital. That same evening, an officer left for the northwest port to announce the division's arrival and embarrassment.

General Decaen, captain-general of the colony, hastily brought out another division[149] which was staying at Port-Napoléon[150], under the direction of commander Hamelin, with orders to come and reinforce the Dupéré Division without delay. And he himself came to the South-East Port to announce to the two captains this unexpected reinforcement.

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[148] ●The English cruise.
[149] ●Frigates La VÉNUS, La Manche and LASTRÉE; corvette L'ENTREPRENANTE,
[150] Port Louis or Northwest Port.

The latter [Dupéré and Bouvet] were then only concerned with the preparation for their defense. They embossed themselves in the center of several reefs or shoals, usually marked by beacons that they removed after taking position so that the English could not try to cut their line or overflow them without running aground.

On the 22nd and 23rd, the four English frigates rallied near the Îlot de la Passe. On the 23rd at 17:00, they set in motion in two columns, and directed respectively, The NEREID and The SYRIUS on La BELLONE; The MAGICIAN and The IPHIGENÎA on La MINERVE.

However, the Hamelin division, announced as reinforcement by the capital-general, and for two days on the way, did not appear. The crews of La BELLONE, La MINERVE and VICTOR had to believe that the entire fight would fall to them alone. The NEREID, in front of the column, smaller and whose draft was weaker than The SIRIUS, crossed the bench and anchored within pistol range of La BELLONE. The SIRIUS ran aground, presenting the front to its side. The MAGICIENNE, at the head of the second column, ran aground within rifle range through La MINERVE and presented him with his bow. The IPHIGENIA who followed her came to port and anchored by the bossoir of La MINERVE at half-range of cannon.

It was 5:30 p.m. The deadly shooting began in this device with great intensity on both sides. At night, the embossings of the French division, having been severed by cannonballs, were missing from each of the ships at about the same time, with the exception of the former ship of the English company [Le CEYLON] which was obliged to cut its own to follow the movement of the two frigates which he thought ordered.

A reef at the bottom of the cove, near which the French division had extended its new line of battle, stopped it so abruptly that your division could not present to the English a front as rigid as in its first position. However, although the French ships were partly obscured by each other, the English do not

seem to have perceived any drop in intensity in the liveliness of their fire.

Around the third hour of the fighting, Major Dupéré was wounded in the head and lost consciousness. From that moment on, Bouvet remained in command of the division until the reduction of the English frigates, whose fire slowed down at midnight and revived only at intervals.

On the 24th, at dawn, The NEREID brought its colors. The IPHIGENIA, which until then had supported her from a distance, withdrew out of reach. The French noticed, observing the maneuvers of the English boats, that the frigates The SIRIUS and The MAGICIENNE were making vain efforts to be towed afloat.

Shouts of joy, then uttered by the crews of the French division, informed the inhabitants of the colony, who rushed in crowds to the nearby shore to witness the naval combat, that the English were defeated. However, The SIRIUS and The MAGICIENNE continued to make a very dense and sustained fire throughout the day of the 24th. It was only towards evening that, desperate to get up, the English commander set fire to the MAGICIENNE after transferring his crew to The IPHIGENIA. The next day he did the same with regard to The SIRIUS.

The IPHIGENIA, thus overloaded with three crews and 400 infantry soldiers, withdrew to the Isle de La Passe. Then appeared at the entrance of the bay the Hamelin Division that a headwind had prevented from coming earlier to the aid of the attacked division. Commander Hamelin sent a canoe to The IPHIGENIA to summon its captain to surrender to him. Commander Bouvet also sent his own. After some hesitation, The IPHIGENIA and the English garrison of the Isle-de-la-Passe went capitulated to discretion. Thus ended the naval battle of Port-Impérial.

Casualties & Losses ●The French captured 1000 prisoners. The English losses were very heavy given the troops with which these ships were charged in preparation for the attack on this French colony. The Dupéré Division had 37 killed and 112

wounded. But La BELLONE and La MINERVE were not in a state to immediately return to sea. According to Clowes: " When they began the action The NEREIDE had on board 281 men, including 69 soldiers of the 33rd and 69 Regiments, and of the Madras Artillery. Of these she appears to have had 92 killed, including Lieutenant John Burns, and Midshipman George Timmins, and about 137 wounded, including Willoughby, who had his left eye torn out. In all, the whole of the ship's company, except 52 persons, and 13 wounded. The MAGICIENNE lost 8 killed and 20 wounded. The SIRIUS, being nearly out of range, sustained neither loss nor damage; but both she and the MAGICIAN had to be destroyed by their crew to save it from capture. The loss in the French ships was officially stated at 37 killed and 112 wounded, The BELLONE being the chief sufferer. The SIRIUS blew up at 11:00am. The IPHIGENIA was captured by the French. At the end of this naval battle, which lasted five long hours, The CEYLON, dismasted, surrendered. The frigates La MINERVE [Captain Bouvet] had 45 men *hors de combat* and La BELLONE three.

English losses had been much greater because of the overcrowding; indeed, the English ships carried, in addition to the crews in full, 400 infantrymen of the 24th Foot Regiment destined to seize l'Isle-de-France [Mauritius], commanded by General Abercrombie, who had just been appointed [future] military governor of the Isle-de-France; prematurely of course.

Consequence of this English defeat: The Isle-de-France continued to serve as a hideout for French privateers and threaten the English trade in the Indian Ocean.

Sources & Readings ●History of the Colony Island of France - Mauritius, 1721-1968, Amédée Nagapen, published in Port Louis [Mauritius], Diocese of Port-Louis, 1996. ●Législation pour les colonies des isles de France et de Bourbon, À l'Isle-de-France, Impr. royale, 1768. ●The Royal Navy, A History From the Earliest Times to the Present, by William Laird Clowes, 6 volumes, Sampson Low, Marston and Company, London, 1900. ●Rodrigues: la Cendrillon des Mascareignes, Christian Barat,

Michel Carayol, Robert Chaudenson, Université de la Réunion, Institut de linguistique et d'anthropologie, Sai me-Clotilde [La Réunion], 1985. ●War and Empire in Mauritius and the Indian Ocean, Ashley Jackson, Publication Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2001.

Sea-air raid against Mers el-Kebir.

Date of action: 3rd and 6th July 1940.

Location: War-port in the Oran sector, Algeria. Geographical coordinates: 35° 43' North latitude and 00° 43' West longitude.

Conflict: World War II [1939-1945].

Context: The situation of the French-English "allies" was not brilliant. The French army had just surrendered to Rommel's German army. As for the British army, it had fled the continent, abandoning all its weapons on the beaches of Dunkirk (4,000 heavy guns and tens of thousands of vehicles). Admiral Darlan, who commanded the French fleet, had decided to sail to an English port with the French warships if Germany demanded their delivery[151]. However, according to the armistice negotiations, Adolf Hitler, who suspected the reaction of the French, did not demand the delivery of the French war fleet to Germany. The French fleet thus remained the only guarantee of the autonomy of the so-called free zone. Winston Churchill, the new Prime Minister of Great Britain since 10th May 1940, was very surprised by this and immediately suspected some secret plot that would allow the Nazis to seize the French fleet in another way. He sent a naval force to Mers el-Kébir to destroy the French squadron at anchor in that war port. The aim of this operation[152] was to capture or to annihilate the French squadron failing to rally it or seize it and, in the process, to seize a war port which would be of major strategic interest to the Royal Navy in the event that the Germans, taking advantage of their alliance with the Spaniards, seized the war port of Gibraltar. So, on 3 July

[151] ●"Action, in tactics, becomes the paramount law of war... Of all your faults, only one is infamous, inaction. So we must constantly seek to create events, not to undergo them...', Ferdinand Foch, Des Principes de la Guerre, lectures given in 1900 at the École Supérieure de Guerre and published by Éditions Berger-Levrault, Nancy-Paris-Strasbourg in 1903, p. 267. Admiral Darlan should have meditated at length on this thought of his elder brother.

[152] ●Called in code *Catapult.*

1940, without a declaration of war of any kind, 200 French ships were seized by treason in the English ports where they had taken refuge and their crews interned in British jails.

Military leaders in command ●*French*: Admiral Marcel Gensoul. ●*English*: vice-admiral James Somerville.

Military Forces involved ●*French*: 120,000 tons of warships were stowed in the port of Mers el-Kébir: two old battleships of 22,000 tons each: Le BRETAGNE and Le PROVENCE, with two modern battlecruisers, STRASBOURG and DUNKERQUE[153]. The destroyers Le MOGADOR, Le VOLTA, Le TIGRE, Le LYNX, Le TERRIBLE and Le KERSAINT[154]. The French had crews reduced by three-quarters of their strength, because on the eve of the battle the French Admiralty had demobilised all the sailors domiciled in Algeria[155]. ●*English* ***H-Force***: three battleships, The HOOD[156] [of 43,000 tons], The VALIANT and The RESOLUTION [8 guns of 381mm each]. The ARK-ROYAL aircraft carrier, eleven destroyers, two battlecruisers. In total, more than 150,000 tons[157].

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[153] ●Each of these two 26,500 ton ships had an armament of 8 x 330mm guns in two quadruple turrets forward, which were aimed at the land at the time of the British attack, in the position occupied at the anchorage of Mers el-Kébir, They also had 16 x 130mm guns for surface or counter-aircraft fire; 8 anti-aircraft 37 mm guns; 32 anti-aircraft 13 mm midget guns; they also carried 4 seaplanes and a catapult.

[154] ●Between 2100 and 2880 tons and armed with 138mm guns and torpedo tubes.

[155] ●A real handicap in battle, as in the naval battles of Damme (1213), Aboukir (1798) and Chesapeake Bay (1781). Clearly, French admirals [in the case of Mers el-Kébir, Admiral Darlan, the real culprit] are not held responsible for their mistakes, as are English admirals.

[156] ●Barely ten months later, HOOD was in the Home Fleet which was sent to intercept and destroy the German battleship BISMARCK off Bergen [Norway]. In May 1941, the HOOD was, in company with the PRINCE OF WALE, the first to spot and attack the BISMARK, which sank her with a single salvo before disappearing over the horizon.

[157] ●In detail; battleship HOOD [Vice-Admiral Somerville, Captain I.G. Glennie]; battleship VALIANT [Captain H.B. Rawlings]; battleship RESOLUTION; battle cruiser ARETHUSA [Captain Q.D. Graham]; battle cruiser ENTHUSA [Captain H.B. Rawlings]. Graham]; battlecruiser ENTERPRISE [Commander J.C. Annesley]; destroyers FAULKNOR [Captain A.F. de Sa-lis]; FOXHOUND [G.H. Peters]; FEARLESS [K.L Harkness]; FORESTER [E.B. Tancock]; FORESIGHT [G.T. Lambert]; ESCORT [J. Bostock); KEPPEL [E.G. [Heywood-Lonsdale]; ACTIVE [E.C.L Turner]; WRESTLER [E.N.V Currey]; VIDETTE [D.R. Brocklebank]; VORTIGERN [R.S. Howlett]; PROTEUS and PANDORA submarines.

Strategy or tactics: The British wanted to take Mers el-Kébir to replace Gibraltar, in case the Germans took it through Spain. They wanted above all to neutralize the French fleet or, better still, to capture it. This was a complete failure and cast a shadow on their ability to resist the German army. The influx of Free French to London suffered.

The war port of Mers el-Kébir was at that time protected on the west by an unfinished 900 m long jetty. The large ships of the French squadron were moored there at an average distance of 120m from each other. From West to East: the battlecruiser Le DUNKERQUE, flagship of Admiral Marcel Gensoul, the battleship Le PROVENCE, the battlecruiser Le STRASBOURG, the battleship Le BRETAGNE, the aircraft carrier Le COMMANDANT-TESTE. The bow [prow] of these ships faced the coast and the stern [stern] was against the pier[158]. At the bottom of the roadstead [to the west] were moored six destroyers. Anti-submarine and anti-torpedo nets protected the roadstead from attack. These protections left only a narrow channel to enter or leave the harbour. However, as the armistice had been in force for eight days, ***the ships were not on alert***[159].

In fact, it was an irrational battle, as the French could only fire back at the end of the attack. The "*ambush*" of Mers el-Kébir was simple: the English, in enormous numerical superiority, fired from the shelter of Cape Mers el-Kébir and pounded the French squadron without the French being able to get out of the trap[160], or even to retaliate effectively, most of them not being able to raise their guns high enough to fire over Cape Mers el-Kébir and Fort du Santon. Firing was carried out at only 15,000m [17,500 yards]. *The most desirable tactic would have been to respond "with a ruse to a villainy"*[161] *by pretending to accept the ultimatum in order to get out of the mousetrap and then to engage in combat on the high seas.*

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[158] ●Important detail, because the gun turrets could only fire forward, i.e. towards the land.
[159] ●The boiler room and the lights were out.
[160] ●Because the English had taken the precaution of mining the pass.
[161] ●As Admiral Darlan's son later suggested.

But it seems that in this case, the English squadron would have retreated without fighting, since it did so as soon as the cannons of Le DUNKERQUE and Le PROVENCE managed to put themselves in a good position to retaliate.

During the attack of 6th July, the British airmen experimented with a new form of offensive tactic: *the attack by torpedoing aircraft in shallow water*. Forced by their politicians to attack their French ally, the British military showed great reluctance. Vice-Admiral Somerville was not alone in his sense of regret and reluctance to attack the French; on July 6th, *four out of 12 British torpedoes were deliberately sabotaged*, as the French found it when they recovered the unexploded torpedoes. We shall have a clearer idea of these "réticences" when we read the account according to English sources, later. The battle shelling of Mers el-Kébir lasted only 10 minutes.

Summary of the action: At about 7 a.m., GMT one hour ahead of the Algerian time, the English squadron commanded by Vice-Admiral Somerville appeared. The English destroyer boat FOXHOUND was detached and arrived at 7:05 am at Mers el-Kébir with the commander C.S.HoIland carrying the ultimatum of the English government.

At the same time, Admiral Somerville (a Francophile who wished to soften the terms of the 1'ultimatum), sent a message to Gensoul as follows in French: *"I send the commandant Holland negotiate with you. The Royal Navy hopes that the proposals will enable the valiant and glorious French Navy to come over to my side. In that case, your ships would still be yours and no one would have any reason to worry about the future. The British fleet is off Oran to welcome you*." The ultimatum drafted by the British Admiralty contained *the order* to Admiral Gensoul to join the English in order to continue the struggle until the final victory against Germans and Italians: "The French ships are invited to sail with reduced crews to a port in England, after which these crews will be repatriated." "In the event that you refuse these reasonable offers, I should, at my great regret, summon you to sink your ships within six hours.

Finally, if none of the above proposals were accepted, I am afraid I have received orders from His Majesty's Government to use all the means of force that might be necessary to prevent your ships from falling into German or Italian hands."

Under threat, it was impossible to agree to join the English, even if, between the Nazis and Albion, the hearts of the French inevitably leaned towards their neighbors across the Channel. Admiral Gensoul immediately ordered his ships to rekindle the boiler fires and make battle arrangements. The French Admiral sent a telegram to Nérac[162], where Admiral Darlan and the French Admiralty were withdrawn, to warn of the English ultimatum set for 14:00 and then postponed until 17:30.

At about 12.30 p.m., while negotiations were in progress, five British seaplanes flew low over the channel and dropped floating magnetic mines in order to lock the French squadron in the mousetrap of the roadstead in case the French refused to capitulate. Indeed, the refusal of the French was considered certain by the British General Staff who knew the French sailors and the traditions of the French Navy.

At 17:56, the British battleships began their bombardment. The HOOD fired the first salvo. Too short. The eight 381mm shells of this salvo created eight huge geysers outside the breakwater. The second salvo partially corrected the shot. Five geysers were harmless; but three shells hit the end of the breakwater, the tip of Cap-Mers-el-Kebir, and the lighthouse vanished.

Admiral Gensoul, who did not want to express any provocation, and who still did not believe that the English would come to this end with an ally [he was a bit naive], had waited for the first salvo before going into action. He ordered the destroyers, which were under pressure more quickly, to sail first.

[162] ●Lot et Garonne; in the old castle where Henri IV sacrificed to the gods of love.

***Ship of the line* "*Le Dunkerque* ".** **1.** *The French Fleet cannot fail to apply the clauses of the Armistice -- in respect of metropolitan France, which would bear the consequences*.

2. *It has received formal orders, and these orders have been transmitted to all commanders, that if after the Armistice the ships should fall into the hands of the adversary [the Nazis] they should be taken to the United States or scuttled.*
3. *These orders will be carried out*.
4. *The ships which are at present in Oran and Mers el-Kébir began their demobilization (reduction of crews) yesterday, 2 July. The men from North Africa have been disembarked* [demobilized],

[*not signed by Admiral Gensoul*]

On 3rd July at 11.20 a.m. (fourteen minutes) before the battle, Admiral Gensoul transmitted to the British a note written in pencil on notebook paper. He unwisely revealed to the British that the crews of the French ships were incomplete (about a quarter of the crews were missing), because the French North African sailors had been demobilized in Algeria the day before the British attack. But there's no doubt that the English knew that the French crews were incomplete and therefore greatly weakened, and that this would make it easier to attack the French squadron.

The whole English fleet, stationed 15 km away, was now firing at an accelerated rate at the French, prisoners in their harbour. It was "the stab in the back." 381mm shells rained down; 24 fell in the narrow sector of the war port. At such a short distance [15 km], no armour could withstand 381mm shells[163].

The counter-torpedo-boats crossed the pass and found themselves in the minefield, which had been laid earlier by the British seaplanes. Shortly after the battle began, a shell from the third salvo hit the BRETAGNE[164] head-on.

The huge explosion was heard over 60 kilometres away. A flame, mixed with pieces of armour and debris, rose 40m and

[163] ●900kg projectiles!
[164] ●Captain Le Pivain.

rained down all around. Half the ship was transformed in a few seconds into an inferno that was impossible for the fire crews to control. The ammunition bunkers had not yet been reached. Suddenly, a flash of lightning was seen by distant eyewitnesses, followed by a second explosion[165]. The plume, the cloud of smoke and flames shot 200 m into the sky. Immediately, Le BRETAGNE capsized, trapping 977 of its 1,120 sailors in its deadly steel coffin. As the French ships, whose pressure was gradually increasing, maneuvered in the harbour (slowly as in a nightmare dream), the English salvos continued to rain down.

Le DUNKERQUE received four non-lethal 381^{mm} shells. Le PROVENCE was also hit. A fire broke out in the stern and there was a leak. Le DUNKERQUE ran aground on the bottom of the harbor on the 1^{m} depth and could be repaired. Le MOGADOR was hit in the stern by a 381^{mm} shell. Le COMMANDANT-TESTE, Le STRASBOURG, Le VOLTA, Le TERRIBLE, Le TIGRE, Le KERSAINT and Le LYNX escaped without damage.

Le DUNKERQUE, which failed[166], was finally able to fire 40 high caliber shells and Le PROVENCE, 23 rounds of 340^{mm}. The 194^{mm} battery of the *Fort du Santon* took part. Finding themselves too closely surrounded, the English squadron dropped out at 18:12.

The Mers el-Kébir squadron had escaped with the loss of only one ship. This combat fell far short of Winston Churchill's objectives, which were to neutralize the French fleet. On July 4th, Admiral Estéva told the press that "the damage to Le DUNKERQUE was only half bad and would soon be repaired". This imprudent statement provoked another British attempt on

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[165] ●Sound travelling slower than light.

[166] ●The crew of this battleship had succeeded in beaching the ship in a fighting position, with the bow pointing 295° to the north-west, *i.e.* towards the English fleet, and at a good distance from the heights of Cape Mers el-Kébir. This was of the utmost importance, as the big guns of Le DUNKERQUE could only fire forward and it was, in fact, the giant shells of Le DUNKERQUE that forced the British *H Force* to retreat to a respectable distance and thus stopped the shelling. We shall see further how the British Admiral of H Force tries to make the British Admiralty believe that the fighting had ceased when he retreated back to the west.

6th July which ended in complete failure. English planes, catapulted from The ARK-ROYAL, bombed the French squadron by surprise at the same place, but only succeeded in killing and wounding 4 officers and 150 sailors without inflicting any material damage on Kebir's squadron.

COASTAL DEFENSES AROUND MERS EL-KÉBIR

According to Royal Navy Intelligence[167]. A battery of 6 x 155mm guns at *Fort du Santon*[168], western corner of the war port. A battery of four 120mm guns south of the military portuary installation[169]. A battery of 3 x 155mm guns at *Pointe de Canastel*[170]. A battery of four 120mm guns at Fort St-Grégoire; another of two 105mm guns 2.5km east of Oran. The harbour channel of Mers el-Kébir was protected by an anti-torpedo ship and anti-submarine booms, while a network of floating mines stretched from Cap Falcon to a point one kilometre north of Pointe Canastel[171]. The breakwater was ten meter-high and the Mers el-Kébir Fort or Fort-du-Santon was perched 100 metres high on a rocky spur.

Description of the raid according to official British military sources

[*Official Records #ADM234/317* Operations against French Fleet at Mers el-Kébir, 3rd-6th July 1940. British Admiralty Records, Public Records Office, Kew, London]. The logbooks of some naval units were used. "[...] In this attack, fire was opened at 17:54 on 3rd July[172] at a maximum range of visibility of 15km, concentration by GIC[173] with aerial spotting. The axis of fire

[167] ●Official Records #ADM234/317 Operations against French Fleet at Mers el-Kebir, 3-6 July 1940. *British Admiralty Archives*, Public Records Office, Kew, London. The logbooks of some naval units were used.
[168] ●In reality, the Fort-du-Santon battery was composed of 194mm naval guns,
[169] ●This one was therefore firing over the harbour.
[170] ●A little far to intervene effectively in the battle of Mers el-Kébir.
[171] ●Covering the immense bay of Oran, beyond which *Force H* was stationed.
[172] ●The military codification of this information is 1754/3,
[173] ●Gunnery Individual Control [or "Contrôle de tir en mode autonome", according to Agnès Masson, director of the Archives of the Service historique de la Marine Nationale at the Château de Vincennes].

was from the north-west, so that the fire[174] from the French ships was obstructed to some extent by the Fort of Mers el-Kébir [Fort du Santon], and the risk of damage to the civilian population and their property was reduced... The effect of the first salvos was observed from aircraft as well as from the speedboat of the destroyer The FOXHOUND. The first salvo fell short. The second hit the breakwater, sending huge blocks of concrete into the air; this probably caused casualties on the upper decks of the battleships. The third salvo fell on the ships, and the battleship Le BRETAGNE blew up. A great orange flame shot up into the sky, followed by a huge column of smoke several hundred-meter long. Another explosion of lesser intensity indicated that a destroyer had blown up. By this time the war port was buried in the smoke of the explosions and fire. Direct sighting became impossible and aerial observation most difficult. The French shore batteries and the battleships[175] Le DUNKERQUE and Le STRASBOURG opened fire about a minute after the first British salvo[176]. The coastal batteries were quickly engaged by the heavy cruiser The ARETHUSA, as the older guns of the heavy cruiser The ENTERPRISE could not

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[174] ●From retaliation. In fact, at anchor. Firing was totally impossible, and not to a certain extent as the British admiral writes, who does not want to reveal that, during the first five minutes of this battle, which lasted 10 minutes in all, it was a risk-free massacre. Only the French ships that had time to move could fire.

[175] ●Or big ships.

[176] ●As mentioned above, the fight lasted only ten minutes. To avoid provoking Somerville, Gensoul refrained from initiating the movement of the ships in the harbor until after the first British salvo. Naturally, preparations had begun as soon as the English issued demands that the French could not accept —especially the demand to scuttle their own ships. Boilers were pressurized, and crews readied for action. However, when the Royal Navy opened fire, the large French ships, still not at optimal steam pressure, had to maneuver before they could effectively respond. The battleships **Dunkerque** and **Provence** only returned fire during the final five minutes of the engagement, having first moved out of their initial anchorage, where they had been positioned in a blind spot. Before engaging, they had to rotate their main turrets toward the British fleet, as their heaviest guns had initially been aimed toward the land. The erroneous claim that they fired "half a salvo after the first British shots" was likely an attempt to downplay the scandalous nature of the massacre —an event that even Somerville ultimately found shameful. After the French army's resistance at Dunkirk to allow the British army to escape, these deaths were considered a betrayal by the French, who would make the British pay dearly in Dakar shortly afterwards.

reach them. Heavy shellings were reported falling near the British battleships as the enemy's fire[177], at first too short, began to improve in accuracy. The lookouts on the FOXHOUND's observation launch recorded several direct hits on the French ships, another explosion with a large sheet of orange flames on a battleship and a direct hit on a destroyer leaving the harbour. None of the French rounds hit, although many (apparently 355^{mm}, presumably from the French battleships as there is no evidence of these calibers in the forts around Mers el-Kébir) fell very close and in some cases framed the British ships. Some of the shrapnel caused minor superficial[178] damage to the battleship HOOD and wounded an officer and a sailor. After thirty-six salvos[179], of 390^{mm} the fire from the French ships died out, but the fire from the forts became more and more accurate. To avoid the damage that might be inflicted by the latter, the English squadron altered its course by[180] 180° and the ships were ordered to deploy a smoke screen[181] .[...]"

"At 18:04 on the 3rd, when the French ships were no longer firing[182]", a ceasefire was ordered. The commander of the *Force H* flagship considered that this would give them an

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[177] ●French Return Fire.

[178] ●Note the accumulation of two minor superficial adjectives to minimize the effectiveness of the French response. This was not the case in Dakar a few days later.

[179] ●One can see that the number of shots and the calibers do not correspond exactly with the French source version, as the largest French calibers at Kébir were only 330mm. Only the RICHELIEU [at Dakar] and the JEAN-BART [at Casablanca] carried 385mm.

[180] ●Elegant and discreet way of saying that the English squadron had retreated, as 180° is a complete half-turn!

[181] ●In order to cover the retreat.

[182] ●Interesting detail showing the fear of the British command to let it be seen that *Force H* had been pushed back by the retaliation of the French ships partly deprived of their crews [recall that the sailors who lived in Algeria had been demobilized there twenty-four hours earlier, leaving only 2/3 crews] and by the shore batteries. In fact, it was really Le DUNKERQUE which, after having succeeded in grounding her bow to the North-West [the orientation of the bow towards the N.W. was crucial, as Le DUNKERQUE's big guns could only fire forward], forced the English to be cautious and to retreat, which saved the rest of the French squadron.

opportunity to abandon their ships[183]"; re-entering the harbour being mined, they would not attempt to leave.

The British H Force then moved west to take up a position at a point from which, if necessary, the bombardment could be resumed without causing [British] casualties to their observation boats or unnecessarily exposing the [British] ships to fire from the forts. When the smoke which had buried Mers el-Kébir had cleared, The FOXHOUND's patrol boat could see that Le DUNKERQUE, which had moved away from the breakwater, lay motionless in the harbour; that Le PROVENCE appeared to have been shot; that fires were raging on Le COMMANDANT-TESTE; and that Le BRETAGNE had disappeared [capsized]. Le STRASBOURG and two MOGADOR-class destroyers could be seen heading east under cover of the shore batteries. The HOOD received repeated messages from shore stations —in visual and wireless signals— requesting a halt to fire. The admiral replied: "Unless I see your ships go down, I shall resume the bombardment." One senses that the British Admiral is trying to camouflage his actions, which might be deemed inappropriate or questionable, under ambiguous expressions.

At 18:20 hours the Admiral commanding *Force H* received a telegraphic radio-message that *one vessel*, of Le DUNKERQUE[184] class ships, had managed to slip out of the harbour mousetrap and was sailing east. Taking into account the other reports of movements, later cancelled, and on the other hand the difficulties of observation due to the smoke, [taking also into account] the fact that the British Admiral wanted to give the impression that he firmly believed that the French were abandoning their ships, [this explains why] the Admiral of Force H

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[183] ●All these comments, taken from the official mission reports and Admiral Somerville's logs, attempt to disguise the British retreat to the west, *i.e.* to Gibraltar, for in fact Le STRASBOURG and several destroyers managed to get out of the mousetrap and reach Algiers, while the Force H, fearing bombardment from Le DUNKERQUE's guns and Le STRASBOURG's, had moved away towards Gibraltar. As Somerville says in his report: "The possible loss of Her Majesty's ships was not justified compared with the possibility of preventing French ships from falling into the hands of the [Nazi] enemies."

[184] ●In fact, it was Le STRASBOURG.

took no initiative for action until this report of the escape of Le STRASBOURG[185] was confirmed at 18:30. And so, an interceptor force of six Swordfish torpedo-bombers each armed with a 250^{mm} force bomb and an S. A. P. torpedo, escorted by Skuas fighters, which had been catapulted at 18:25 to bomb the large ships at Mers el-Kébir, was then diverted from its primary mission to attack the battleship Le STRASBOURG, while the whole of *Force H*, altering its westbound course[186] to turn back eastbound, also went in pursuit. Meanwhile, the British destroyer The WRESTLER, off Oran, was heavily engaged by the French coastal batteries and a hundred shells fell in its immediate vicinity before The WRESTLER retreated in accordance with its orders[187].

"At 18:43, the English heavy cruisers and destroyers in full chase were sent far ahead, leaving the battleships behind unmasked[188]. The battleship HOOD and the lighter ships put on the full pressure. The bomb attack[189] on Le STRASBOURG was fierce and although it met with powerful reaction, it is believed that at least one bomb touched the French ship. Two Swordfish torpedo planes were lost, but their crews were picked up by The WRESTLER."

At 7.14 p.m. The FORESTER picked up Commander Holland, Lieutenant-Commanders Spearman and Davies as well as the crew of The FOXHOUND's speedboat, which was abandoned."

"Between 19:33 and 19:45, a French destroyer, which was heading west along the coast, was engaged at a distance of 10 km to 16 km by the heavy cruisers The ARETHUSA and

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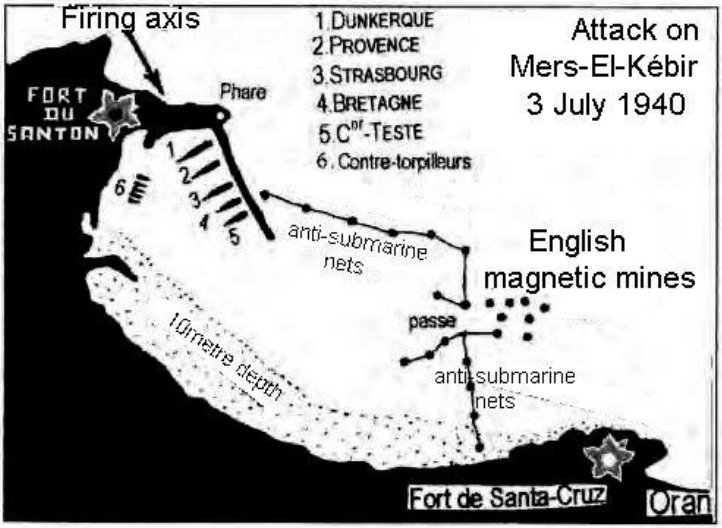
[185] ●Phrase rather confused in its original English form showing the uneasiness, the feeling of guilt of the admiral who had let a battleship escape.
[186] ●Race which, it should be remembered, was an initial rush to the West, to Gibraltar.
[187] ●Every retreat or withdrawal is exaggeratedly justified to avoid the wrath of the Admiralty and of History.
[188] ●The mask [or protection] consisted of escort destroyers. They constituted the first line of defense of a large ships, not only against aircraft but especially against submarines.
[189] ●By Swordfish torpedo planes.

The ENTERPRISE. A little later, the battleships The HOOD and The VALLIANT fired a few rounds of 380mm. At least three hits were made before the French destroyer turned back to Oran[190]. The British ships were forced to alter their course to



avoid the torpedoes[191]. At 19:50, six Swordfish aircraft armed with torpedoes were catapulted from the aircraft carrier ARK-ROYAL, with the mission to follow up the attack[192] using the last glimmers of twilight."

"The pursuit was maintained at full speed until 20:20. Le STRASBOURG and its escort destroyers were about 40 km ahead[193]. The pursuit was then abandoned. By this time the

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190 ●A single hit from these famous 381mm shells would have been more than enough to 'vaporize' the destroyer. They would be powerful enough to send a battleship to the bottom. It is very unlikely that the torpedo boat was hit by anything other than indirect shrapnel.

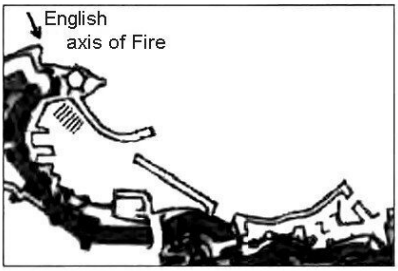
191 ●This comment is made without any explanation.

192 ●On Le STRASBOURG.

193 ● The claim of a 40-kilometer lead is a significant exaggeration. In reality, considering that *Le Strasbourg* was traveling at 31 knots (57.41 km/h) and that the British admiral took 25 minutes to decide on pursuit with his squadron—whose slowest ship, *HMS Hood*, was also capable of 31 knots at full speed—*Le Strasbourg* had only gained a 23.9-kilometer lead. Before the chase began, *Hood* would have had ample opportunity to fire upon *Le Strasbourg*, which was departing the naval port armed with its heaviest

[French] squadron based at Algiers, which included several cruisers armed with 150mm and 200mm guns [194], had sailed in the direction of Oran, and it was foreseeable that they would join up with Le STRASBOURG at 21:00. Admiral Somerville, [who feared for his squadron], considered that contact and engagement were not justified[195]. His destroyer flotilla had no recent experience of night pursuit and the French were numerically superior for the following reasons[196]":

"1* The possibility of spotting Le STRASBOURG at night was low."
"2* H Force would be at a disadvantage, as it stood out in silhouette against the last light of sunset."
"3* The running speed was too high to allow the destroyers to scatter[197]."



"4* The fuel autonomy of the V and W class destroyers did not allow for high-speed pursuits of more than three hours."
"5* Unless The HOOD was in a position to support the lead forces, the latter were numerically far inferior. This tactical support could not be provided in the event of night action."

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artillery, capable of reaching targets up to 20 kilometers away. However, *Le Strasbourg* itself could not have returned fire effectively, as its main turrets were unable to engage targets directly astern. Admiral Somerville, fearing above all the potential loss of a ship, was reluctant to risk *Le Strasbourg* stopping to engage at a range of 15 kilometers—especially when *Le Dunkerque* could have flanked or encircled it under cover of night.

[194] ●In fact, they were "destroyers".

[195] ●Curious reasoning when one knows the enormous imbalance of forces in favor of the British, despite what is said in this report.

[196] ●Sic! The comment is intended for the British Admiralty.

[197] ●To take a narrower, wider tactical attacking position, in order to carry out convergent fire without the battleship (whose main turrets fired only forward) being able to fire back in all directions.

"6* The possible loss of Her Majesty's ships was not justified in comparison with the possibility of preventing French ships from falling into Nazi hands[198]."
"7* The VALIANT and The RESOLUTION were not masked[199]."

"As a result, the squadron changed course after 20:25 to turn west, and the Admiralty was informed that Force H would be stationed west of Oran overnight with the intention of resuming air attacks on the Mers el-Kébir French squadron at dawn or as soon as possible."

"Between 19:30 and 21:00, flak (anti-aircraft fire) was fired at French reconnaissance aircraft and bombers which dropped a few bombs, all of which missed their target except four which fell forty meters from the WRESTLER. The attacks were not returned[200]."

LE STRASBOURG IS ATTACKED BY TORPEDO PLANES

6 July 1940 according to British sources.

"At 20:55, twenty minutes after sunset, a squadron of Swordfish torpedo planes attacked Le STRASBOURG with torpedoes. They made their approach from land, so that the target could be silhouetted against the sunset light[201]. In this way they were able to attack without being seen. Only the last two aircraft were engaged by the French flak DCA of the escorting destroyers. Observation of the results was made difficult by the darkness and smoke from the smokestacks, but an explosion was seen near the stern of Le STRASBOURG and there was some evidence of impact in the middle. All the planes returned,

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[198] ●The reader will translate for himself: 'The possible loss of British ship was unjustified as against the possibility of French ships being allowed to fall into enemy hands."
[199] ●Unmasked, that is, not covered by escorting destroyers. Too many reasons accumulated to justify a retreat may seem suspicious. In fact, the British admiral wanted to protect himself against a possible Martial Court, as the raid against Mers el-Kébir had turned into an almost total fiasco: only Le BRETAGNE had really been put out of action permanently. And strategically speaking, French public opinion was in a rage against this stabbing in the back of an ally and some extremists were calling for the opening of hostilities against England.
[200] ●Because of the lack of visibility
[201] ●Remember that the sun had set at 20:35.

though one was fired upon by French flak from a group of destroyers sailing some ten kilometers astern of the target[202].

The [British] aircraft losses during the day's operations were five, three Swordfish from the bomber wing, one Skua fighter shot down in air combat, another Skua which crashed near the carrier[203]. All the crews were saved except the one of the Skua that was shot down. It was noted that the (French) fighters did not pursue the British planes."

H FORCE retreats to Gibraltar

"The plan to carry out an air attack on Mers el-Kébir at dawn on 4th July 1940 with 12 Swordfish bombers and 9 Skua escort fighters had to be aborted because of the dense fog. As the British Admiral had received (on the 3rd at 22:50) a message from Admiral Gensoul that his ships were out of action and that their personnel had been ordered to evacuate them, the British squadron returned to Gibraltar at 19:00 on 4 July[204]."

Raison of the failure of the British Raid[205]

"Returning to the course of the operation, the Admiral of Force H gives the reasons why his squadron was west of the port of Mers el-Kebir after the ceasefire. It was considered that the mines laid at the entrance to the harbour were sufficient to prevent the French ships from leaving, while the request to 'cease the bombardment' and the large explosions observed gave the impression that the French were *abandoning their ships*. The last thought on his mind was how to complete his mission *without causing more loss of life* to the very brave but misguided French, and without exposing his fleet to damage by coastal artillery or submarine attacks. He [the British admiral] was also under the impression that torpedo planes to complete

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[202] ●Posted in the rear guard of the French battleship Le STRASBOURG.
[203] ●Because it was badly damaged.
[204] ●Surprising excuse to justify to the Admiralty the retreat and return to Gibraltar, Even in the unlikely event that Gensoul's messages were real (which leaves many doubts) the British admiral would never have trusted this false claim without verification
[205] ●Always according to the British Admiralty Report.

the destruction of the ships had been catapulted from the carrier or were about to be[206]."

"Perhaps the repeated delays in launching the attack (without the admiral's knowledge) had seriously disrupted the pace of take-offs and landings on the ARK-ROYAL."

"Admiral Somerville seriously wondered to what extent the use of force might have been avoided if Admiral Gensoul had at once agreed to receive Commander Holland. The French Admiral's final offer differed, unfortunately, from the An-English proposals, simply in that the destruction of the ships would only be carried out in the event of the French fleet falling into enemy [Nazi] hands. Admiral Gensoul maintained that the danger was not imminent, whereas we maintained that it was.

If a greater margin of time had been available, Commander Holland might have been able to convert Admiral Gensoul to the English point of view, but by the time he made his offer it was too late, because negotiations could not be continued beyond 5.20 p.m. Indeed, French reinforcements were approaching and the orders of His Majesty's Government imperatively demanded that a decision be made before nightfall.

Arrival of British submarines on the French North African coast 3-6 July 1940

"As a precautionary measure to prevent any interference by French or Italian forces[207] outside the execution of Operation Catapult, submarines The PROTEUS and The PANDORA moved into surveillance positions on 3rd July in their assigned areas. The PROTEUS was assigned to cover *Force H* northwards off Oran. At 21:50 on 3rd July, this submarine was ordered to patrol off *Cap de l'Aiguille*[208], 23km east of Oran, northern area of 35° 55' North. Both submarines were ordered to sink

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[206] ●Only naïve justifications to cover the British Admiral in case of Court Martial for mission failure.

[207] ●On 2 July, at 22:47, at 36° 12' 30" North and 03° 04' 36" East, an Italian torpedo had narrowly missed the British destroyer VOLTIGERN. Despite a 65-minute chase, the Italians had managed to slip through the fingers of the Royal Navy and disappear.

[208] ●From the Pointe de l'Aiguille, just beyond the village of Kristel, the PROTEUS could easily control the arrival of any reinforcements from Algiers.

any French vessel they encountered. The PANDORA was later informed that Le STRASBOURG might arrive off Algiers after 23:00 on 3rd July.

"At 14:47 on 4th July, in foggy weather, The PROTEUS sighted the aircraft-carrier[209] COMMANDANT-TESTE in compass bearing 160°, 10km (approximately), course 035°. Before an attack could be launched, the French ship had altered her course to the east and was lost in the mist."

"At 23:05, in accordance with her instructions, Le PROTEUS began patrolling off Cap Kramis, about 100 km east of Oran[210]. At 3:40 on 6th July, a message from the Admiral commanding the North Atlantic Zone ordered that French ships were no longer to be attacked unless they attacked first."

"Le COMMANDANT-TESTE was sighted again, at 18:34, on the 6th, escorted this time by two destroyers. Shortly afterwards, Le PROTEUS was ordered to return to Gibraltar."

"The PANDORA, off Algiers, reported seeing after 16:45 on 3rd July six French cruisers and four destroyers sailing west. During the night (on the 3rd at 21:50) the order was received to attack any French warship. At 10:26 on the 4th, three destroyers were sighted on course 065°, 1500 yards offshore, but The PANDORA was unable to approach within striking distance[211]."

"At 13:58 on the 4th, the submarine PANDORA sighted a French ship, which was believed at the time to be of La GALISSONN1ÈRE class. In fact, it was the RIGAULT-DE-GENOUÏLLY, a *minelayer boat*. Immediately taking its torpedo-firing measures, at 14:07, The PANDORA launched about four torpedoes[212] at a distance of 3500 metres. Two "certain"

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[209] ●In fact, it was a *seaplane-carrier*.

[210] ●In fact, 140 km from Oran as the crow flies, only 20 km from Pont-de-Mesnard.

[211] ●Attacking three destroyers in broad daylight would have been suicidal and it is likely that her commander kept a low profile.

[212] ●The adverb ***about*** seems to mean that more than four torpedoes were launched to sink the tiny minelayer mistaken for a torpedo-boat. A ship's captain knows exactly how many torpedoes were fired. Clearly, four torpedoes were more valuable than a small minelayer.

and one "probable" hit the minelayer. The French ship immediately broke down, and soon after flames were observed. The PANDORA approached and found that there was no chance to save anyone[213]. At 15:32 on the 4th, the RIGAUD-DE-GENOUÏLLY sank by the stern, and a few seconds later there was an extremely loud explosion, probably her ammunitions."

"For some time from 16:18, the PANDORA was chased by an aircraft and a destroyer or patrol boat; bomb explosions and depth charges were heard at intervals." "The PANDORA continued to patrol on 5th and 6th July without incident, and on the 7th was ordered to return to Gibraltar."

"The British Admiralty expressed deep regret to the French Embassy for the tragic event[214], which was attributed to the fact that after Operation Catapult in Oran on 3rd July, the instructions not to attack French vessels had not reached one of the two submarines."

Casualties & Losses ●French: on 3 and 6 July: 1297 killed and missing and 351 wounded. This was probably the only battle where the number of killed exceeded that of wounded. Le DUNKERQUE, hit by English fire, ran aground 50 metres from the shore. Eight hundred and forty sailors evacuated her and 340 came back on board in order to seal the breaches.

On 27 September, Le DUNKERQUE was *refloated*. ●*English*: Force H ships had only light damage. Five ARK-ROYAL aircrafts were shot down by French flak.

Consequence of this British partial-failure: The aggression of 3rd July against Mers el-Kébir raised an immense wave of anti-English indignation throughout France, in a country already traumatized by the catastrophes of the previous month. It almost

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[213] ●It was not out of generosity and kindness of spirit that the submarine came to inquire if there was any way to save her, but to see if it was necessary to finish her off with another torpedo to prevent the French from saving and repairing the ship. The RIGAUD-DE-GENOUÏLLY was thus sunk in a period of non-hostility between France and England; which was a crime.

[214] ●The torpedoing of the small *minelayer* boat. The message had been sent by the British Admiralty on 4 July at 20:05 and it was only on the 5th after 20:45 - i.e. twenty-four hours later - that the order was finally transmitted to the submarines!

provoked war between Vichy France and England, the ally of the preceding days[215].

In the end, only diplomatic relations with England were broken off, but this led to long-lasting resentments which were skilfully exploited by Nazi propaganda. It can also be added that this clumsy aggression led to the unwarranted death of many British soldiers, because during the attack on Dakar (September 23rd-25th, 1940), and the Anglo-American landings in Casablanca, Oran and Algiers, while the French Army readily agreed to offer no resistance to the American Allies, the *coastal batteries manned by sailors* made the attack on Mers el-Kébir costly for the British.

Paradoxically, the British raid on Mers el-Kébir *prevented* the French Air Force from being completely wiped out, as the *Italian Armistice Commission* in Turin and the *German Commission* in Wiesbaden had ordered. The two occupying powers waived this clause.

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[215] ●If Marshal Pétain had not been there to calm tempers, the situation might have spiraled further into chaos. In his address to the French people on 11 July 1940, the newly appointed French head of state spoke with measured restraint: "[...] In these last few days, a new ordeal has been inflicted upon France. England, breaking off a long-standing alliance, launched an unexpected attack and destroyed French ships immobilized and partially disarmed in our ports. There was no reason to anticipate such aggression, nor any to justify it. Did the British Government believe we would agree to hand over our war fleet to Germany and Italy? If so, it was mistaken. But it was also mistaken in thinking that, under threat, we would fail to honor our commitments to our adversaries. The French Navy was ordered to defend itself, and, despite the unequal nature of the battle, it did so with resolve and courage. France, defeated in heroic battles, abandoned yesterday, and attacked today by England, to whom she had made so many painful sacrifices--- now stands alone before her Destiny. Yet she will draw from this solitude a renewed courage, preserving her unwavering faith in the future..." Philippe Pétain, marshal, La France Nouvelle, Principe de la Communauté, suivis des Appels et Messages, 17 juin 1940 - 17 juin 1941, Fasquelle Editeurs, Paris, 1941, p. 27 and 28. It must be acknowledged that Pétain did not succumb to inflammatory rhetoric. Aside from a pointed jab at England ---abandoned yesterday, attacked today by England,'' whose army had fled the battlefield and reembarked without order at Dunkirk the previous month, abandoning more than 4,000 guns on the beaches, Pétain remained strikingly moderate in tone. Notably, he continued to refer to the Germans not as *enemies,* but as *adversaries.*

Another consequence, expressed by Ehrengart[216]: "No doubt, some hesitants were dissuaded from joining De Gaulle as a result of this operation, but it is obvious that it did not cool down the most determined. Two days later, on 5th July, Chief Petty Officer Duvauchelle and Petty Officer Méchouas 'borrowed' the Laté 29 S HB2-5 to go to Malta! It is no less certain that the ranks of the Free French would undoubtedly have swelled further if the would-be dissidents had not felt that they were joining "strange allies" who were deliberately and without prior warning coming to open fire on them."

This failure of the Royal Navy to efficiently face the French Navy cast doubt on the British ability to fight the German army.

The battleship DUNKERQUE succeeded almost single-handedly in repelling the British squadron. (Source XYZ)

Sources & Readings ●Action imminent; three studies of the naval war in the Mediterranean theatre during 1940, Peter C. Smith, London. ●De Gaulle and Algeria 1940-1960, from Mers

[216] ●*Vichy Air Force in Combat*, M. Ehrengart, Paris.

El-Kébir to the Algiers Barricades, Michael Kettle, Quarret Books, London, 1993. ●De Mers El-Kebir à Londres 1940-1944, Jean Boutron, Pion, Paris, 1980. ●Mers El-Kébir, (1940); the Franco-British rupture, Hervé Coutau-Bégarie and Claude Huan, Economica Palis, 1994. ●Mer El-Kébir, with numerous unpublished documents, Pierre Varillon, Paris, 1950. ●Archives of the Royal Navy, London.

Naval battle of Dakar.

Other name: Allied code name "*Operation Menace*",

Date of the action: September 23rd-25th, 1940.

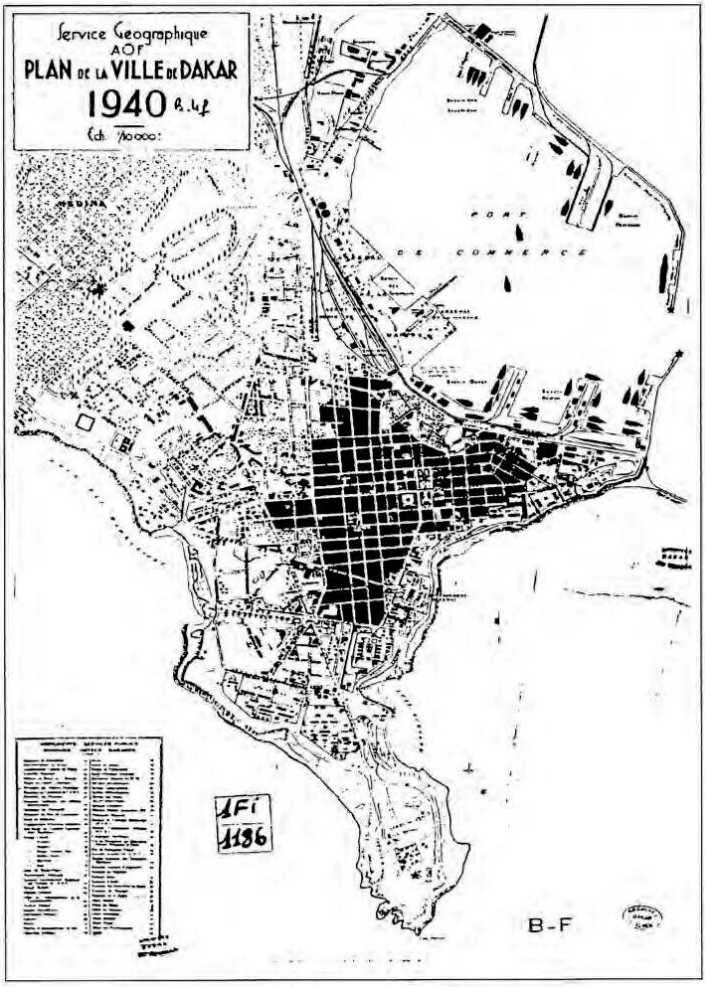
Location: Capital of Sénégal. At that time capital of French West Africa. Geographical coordinates: 14° 40' North latitude and 17° 26' West longitude.

Conflict: World War II, 1939-1945. Civil War in France.

Background: According to the Armistice Negotiations, Adolf Hitler did not demand the delivery of the French War Fleet to Germany. Winston Churchill immediately suspected some secret scheme that would allow the Nazis to seize it anyway. So he sent a naval force to Mers el-Kébir in order to rally the French Fleet or, failing that, destroy the French ships that was stationed at anchor and unarmed in that war port. Having failed to rally or destroy the Mers el-Kébir squadron, he sent a squadron to Dakar. The aim was to bring the A.O.F. [*Afrique Occidentale Française*] into the Allied camp or to destroy the French squadron anchored there if the first objective was not achieved. A third and lesser known objective was to recover the huge stocks of gold from the *Bank of France*, the *Bank of Belgium* and the *Bank of Poland*[217] transferred to Kayes in Senegal just before the German invasion. The British had already attacked Dakar on July 7th, 1940. But the anti-aircraft artillery of the French battleship had repelled the English planes. English torpedo planes tried to sink the battleship RICHELIEU, which was

[217] While the National Bank of Poland had sheltered its gold reserves "in France," the Catholic Church of Poland had been more cautious, transferring its entire treasure - consisting of works of art and religious objects made of precious metals and diamonds - to the custody of the Catholic Church of Canada in Quebec, Then Poland was taken over by a communist regime favorable to Moscow, and the Church of Quebec refused to return the treasure, which for many years was moved from one hiding place to another throughout the province of Quebec, to escape the searches of the Canadian Mounted Police requested by the communist government of Poland. All was restored to the Church of Poland (thanks to the Polish Pope John-Paul II) at the end of the Cold War,

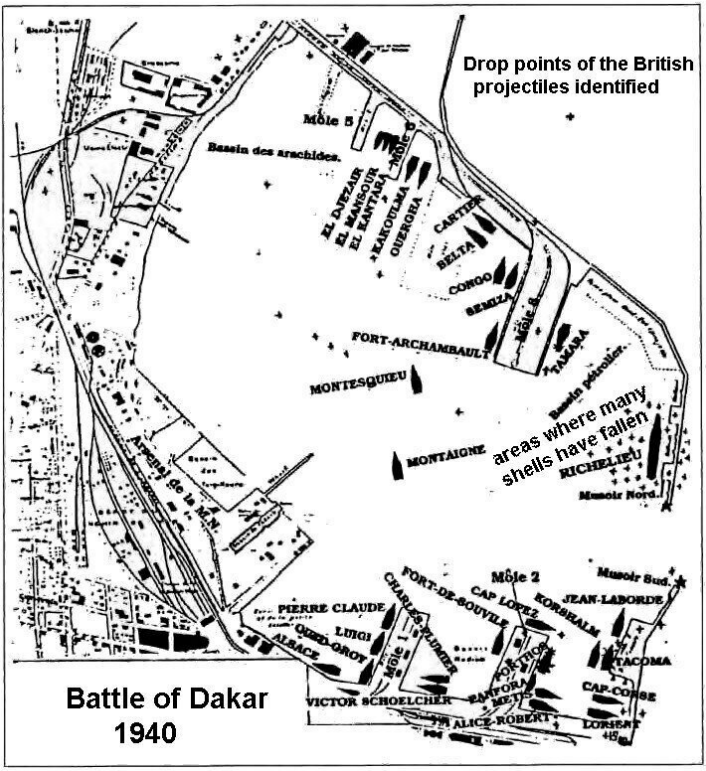
being repaired in the port. The Vichy authorities had immediately dispatched the GC 1/4 fighter group equipped with Curtis H-75s, because the air defense of the A.O.F.[218] was only ensured by the old Dewoitine 500s and 502s, which were



[218] French West Africa.

completely obsolete[219]. The assembly point of the Anglo-Allied fleet was Freetown.

Military leaders in command ●*Anglo-Allied*: Admiral Cun-



ningham [English fleet]; Major General Irwin [English landing troops]. General de Gaulle [Free French Forces]. ●*Vichy French Forces*: Governor-General of the A.O.F.: Pierre Boisson. *Land Forces*: General Barrau, General Arnoux [Senegalese troops], General Picart [defense of the support point]; *Air Force*: General Gama; National Navy: Vice-Admiral Lacroix. The government of Marshal Pétain had, shortly before, sent[220] this vice-admiral to Dakar, one of whose nephews had just been

[219] Those of Squadron 1/6.
[220] By air.

killed in the trap of Mers el-Kébir. As a result, Lacroix dreamed of returning a blow for a blow to the British. This was of course a pledge of loyalty to the Vichy government.

Involved forces ●*Anglo-Allies*

ROYAL NAVY

●aircraft carrier The ARK ROYAL [captain Holhmd],
●battleship The BARHAM [captain G,C. Cooke].
●battleship The RESOLUTION [captain O. Bevir].
●cruiser The AUSTRALIA [captain R.S. Stewart],
●cruiser The DEVONSHIRE, Vice Admiral Cunningham.
●cruiser The FIJI.
●cruiser The CUMBERLANO [captain G.H.E. Russell],
●cruiser The CORNWALL [captain CF. Hammill],
●destroyer The ESCAPADE.
●destroyer The ECHO.
●destroyer The ECLIPSE.
●destroyer The INGLEFIELD [captain P. Todd]
●destroyer The FORESIGHT [lieut-commander Lam-bert]
●destroyer The FAULKNER.
●destroyer The FORTUNE.
●destroyer The FURY.
●destroyer The DRAGON.
●destroyer The FORESIGHT.
●destroyer The FORESTER.
●destroyer The GREYHOUND,
●patrol boat The MILFORD.
●patrol boat The BRIDGE WATER.
●dam keeper The QUANNET.
●wing tanker The OCEAN COAST.
●The BELGRAVIAN. transporting food for troops.

BRITISH AIR FORCES.

●16 Swordfish torpedo bombers, aboard ARK ROYAL.
●16 Skua fighters, on board ARK ROYAL.
●6 Warus on board the battleship BARHAM, the cruiser DEVONSHIRE, The CUMBERLAND and The AUSTRALIA.
●6 Swordfish and 2 Walrus were in Freetown.

Troop transports for the Landing Corps:
4,270 British troops made up the landing "A Force." It included two brigades of Royal Marines [101 and 102], a motorcycle platoon of the 5 Royal Lancashire 1st Regiment, a company of engineers, and four chenillettes. All of them were on board the transports ETTRICK, KENYA. KARANJA and SOBIESKI, the latter being a Polish ship.

FNFL [Free French Naval Forces, under direct command of the General de Gaulle]
●Le SAVORGAN-DE-BRAZZA [Commander Roux, 1,969 tons, 3 pieces of 138],
●Le PRESIDENT-HONDUCE [armed trawler],

●Le COMMANDANT-DUROC [630-ton aviso-dredger].
●Le COMMANDANT-DOMINÉ [630-ton aviso-dredger],
●L'ANADYR [troops, equipment: cannons, tanks, crated aircraft, vehicle].
●Le NEVADA [transport of troops and materials,..].
●Le FORT LAMY [transpart of troops and materials...].
●Le CASAMANCE [transport of troops and materials.,,].
●aircraft in crates on cargo ships for the FAFL [Free French Air Forces]:
6 Blenheims; 12 Lysanders; 2 Goéland; 1 Dewoîtine.
●The WESTERNLAND [Dutch transport of 16,479 tons] carrying General de Gaulle, leader of the Free French, with 1,270 French landing troops.
- a company of the 13 Demie-brigade de Légion étrangère [13 DBLE].
- a mixed company,
- a company of Marine Infantry or marine fusiliers.
●The PENNLAND [Dutch troop transport of 16,082 tons] carrying 1,130 French:
- two companies of the 13 DBLE.
- a company of machine guns
- an artillery section.
- 3 anti-tank cannons.
- 9 tanks.
- a company of truck transportation.

Battleship Le DUNKERQUE

●VICHY FRENCH MARINE NATIONALE

● battleship Le RICHELIEU then in repair [Captain Marzin]. Only one 380 mm turret was working.
●destroyer Le HARDI [Captain de Tannenberg],
●aviso (dispatch-boat) Le D'ENTRECASTEAUX [Captain La-Croix].
●aviso Le D'IBERVILLE [Captain Ardent].
●aviso Le CALAIS [Captain Lucas],
●aviso Le COMMANDANT-RIVIÈRE [Captain Lachèse],
●patrol boat L'AIR-FRANCE I [Ensign Bonarme].
●patrol boat L'AIR-FRANCE III [Ensign Juventin],
●patrol boat L'AIR-FRANCE IV [Ensign Lugan].
●tanker Le GARONNE [Commander Moreau].

●1st Division of auxiliary cruiser[221] : Le EL DJÉZAIR, Le EL MANSOUR, Le EL KANTARA, Le CHARLES PLUMIER, Le VICTOR SCHŒLCHER.
●Le BÉVEZIERS submarine, under repair [Lieutenant Commander Lancelot].
●Submarine Le PERSÉE [lieutenant commander Lapierre],
●Submarine L'AJAX [corvette captain Guimont].
The French ships received before the battle the reinforcement of a part of the Y force : Le GEORGES LEYGUES [Commander Lemonnier], Le GLOIRE and Le MONT-CALM [Commander Ferrière] of the 1st Division of heavy cruisers. Le FANTASQUE. Le MALIN and L'AUDACIEUX of the 10th Light Cruiser Division.

AVIATION

●a Fighter Group composed of two Curtis squadrons based at Ouakam.
●a Glenn-Martin Bomber Group based at Thies.
●the 4th Naval Aviation Exploration Squadron [Lieutenant Commander Durant Coupel de Saint-Front] composed of 3 seaplanes of the Croix-du-Sud type and 3 Loire 130 [lieutenant de Boislille],

LAND ARMY
1st, 4th and 7th Regiments of Senegalese Infantry based in Dakar; 4th Regiment of March of Thiès; 8th Field Artillery Regiment; 6 automitrailleuses.

FRENCH COASTAL BATTERIES
●at Yaf: 3 guns of 155mm.
●at Mamelles: 3 guns of 240mm.
●at Cap Manuel: 2 guns of 240mm.
●at the Island of Gorée: 2 guns of 240mm, 4 guns of 138mm , 5 guns of 90mm.
●at Bel Air. 2 guns of 240mm.
●in Rufisque, 2 guns of 95mm.

Strategy or tactics: On the island of Gorée, there was a possibility of landing on the N.E. side [i.e. "*windward*"], because the rollers and the waves of the Atlantic Ocean made the leeward coast unapproachable. In fact, *the landing* took place at Rufisque. Fifty-four trading ships of various nationalities were anchored in the harbor of Dakar.

In contrast to Mers el-Kébir, the Dakar squadron was able to defend itself against the British squadron. The General de Gaulle's presence with 2,400 French soldiers on board the English fleet. The English wished to tilt the A.O.F.[222] to the side of the Free French and the Allies. But the surprise was impossible

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221 ●Disarmed; in fact, these were civilian liners of the Compagnie de Navigation Mixte, requisitioned as Troop Transports by the Marine Nationale.
222 ●Afrique Occidentale Française.

after the attack of Mers el-Kébir. Therefore, on September 11th, at 8.35 am, the squadron of Admiral Bourragué [three French cruisers, Le GEORGES-LEYGUES, Le GLOIRE and Le MONTCALM, and three light cruisers, L'AUDACIEUX, Le FANTASQUE and Le MALIN], coming from Toulon, crossed the Strait of Gibraltar without the British could stop them, to go and reinforce the base of Dakar. It was this reinforcement that made the allied attack on Dakar a failure. Moreover, a system of *hydrophones* had been set up by the French 17 km off Dakar. It signaled to the French the *precise position* of the British ships. The plan of the Opération Menace foresaw a landing of the FFL[223] with General de Gaulle and the support of the British Navy. At the request of the General, the plan provided for the withdrawal of British forces.

Le RICHELIEU, Coll. Priv.

The "Operation Menace" was determined as follows:

Initial phase: Winston Churchill had decided that Force M should appear at dawn in front of Dakar. Two French Lucioles aircraft would take off from ARK ROYAL to land at Ouakam airfield. Fifteen minutes after the launching of the operation, British planes would drop propaganda leaflets over Dakar.

At Time H+75 mn, the free French delegation would reach the barrage at the entrance to the port, on board a fast boat, at the same time as Le SAVORGAN-DE-BRAZZA would

[223] ●Forces Françaises Libres or FFF Free French Forces.

deliver an ultimatum to the French Vichissois forces. During this time, the English forces would locate the warships anchored in the harbor and the coastal batteries in anticipation of the fighting that might occur.

At 3:15 a.m., the Gaullist planes would arrive in front of the harbor, force the barrage and land their troops. Simultaneously, the Gaullist air force would neutralize the Vichy Air Force, while the WESTERLAND and the PENNLAND would land their FFL landing troops,

Three possibilities had been considered:

a] *Successful* completion of the initial phase. In this case, the English troops would not land.

b] *Difficulties*.

c] *Big difficulties*: In the cases b and c the English troops would have to disembark, the transport ships would have to move away from the French guns and the English fleet to approach in order to pound the defenses.

Four plans had been made to begin as soon as the forts defending the Dakar Sector had been destroyed by the fleet artillery:

RUFUS PLAN - A battalion would land on the beach at Rufisque[224] to establish a bridgehead. From there, the landed troops should march to Dakar. Halfway to Hann, these troops would have to advance over a narrow strip of land, hemmed in between the swamps and the sea, and therefore easy to defend.

WILLIAM PLAN. Two battalions would land on the beach at Hann Bay to create a beachhead. A third battalion would attack the Ouakam airfield and a fourth would attempt to seize Dakar.

CONQUEROR PLAN. It would combine the first two plans.

CHARLES PLAN. In the event of a desperate situation, the French avisos and transports would have to withdraw to the S.-E. and under the protection of Le COMMANDANT DOMINÉ and Le COMMANDANT-DUROC who would approach the

[224] ●West of Diakaol.

coast; The WESTERNLAND and The PENNLAND transports would proceed to Rufisque to land Free French troops.

The gunners of the French Navy and the French airmen, ulcerated by the Mers el-Kébir Trap, had decided to make the Royal Navy pay for its naval ambush. Their shots were "of an extraordinary precision, even at very great distance", according to the expression of an English pilot. However, by a misfortune, which could be partly attributed to the lack of dexterity of the British gunners, among the many 380 mm shells that began to rain down around the French battleship Le RICHELIEU, none of them made a direct hit and the damage was insignificant, despite the fact that the ship was at anchor. As for the bombs of 250 and 500 pounds that fell in packets on the armored deck of the French ship, they did "no more damage than if bricks had been thrown at it."

Aerial photo of the Rock of Gibraltar, taken by the French Secret Service for retaliatory bombing purpose after the British attack on Mers-El-Kébir. July 1940

Summary of the action: As soon as the British Admiralty received the news of the arrival of French reinforcements from Toulon, it telegraphed to the fleet to cancel Operation Menace. Because "the presence of three French cruisers in Dakar made it impracticable." But in the face of General de Gaulle's insistence, the expedition continued.

September 23rd

At dawn, the combined fleet arrived, not in sight, but off Dakar. At 06:05 hours, the two French planes landed as planned at the Ouakam Airfield. The crews were immediately placed under arrest. The Swordfish from the aircraft-carrier The ARK ROYAL, which wanted to drop their propaganda leaflets were

also badly hit by a dense fire of "flak[225]" from the battleship Le RICHELIEU under repair in the port. The Gaullist commanders —among them Commander d'Argenlieu— finally arrived on board two fast boats under white flag in order to deliver a summons to the French commander-in-chief. But as, in the meantime, the British planes had succeeded in dropping some of the leaflets, the French garrison in the Dakar sector had been given the battle signal. As a result, the two fast boats had to turn back under the fire of machine-guns. The parliamentarians were almost captured. In a civil war, the parties are always less respectful of international and military customs. At 7:45 a.m., Le RICHELIEU fired three warning shots at Le SAVORGAN-DE-BRAZZA, which had approached to escort the parliamentarians of Free France, and which immediately withdrew towards the South-West.

At about 8:07 a.m., General de Gaulle, leader of the Free France, delivered an ultimatum to the French Vichy military commander in Dakar and, at the same time, he gave the avisos Le COMMANDANT-DOMINÉ and Le COMMANDANT-DUROC orders to enter the port of Dakar and to disembark their Marine commandos. Upon seeing this, Le RICHELIEU and the battery on the island of Gorée began to fire new and even more threatening warning shots to the avisos which had to turn back.

The plan "Success of the initial phase" was thus replaced by the plan "Difficulties". As soon as the threat to the Dakar garrison became a reality, the naval units moved to their combat positions. Le GEORGES-LEYGUES posted itself in the outer harbor where it was joined by Le MONTCALM. Le FANTASQUE and Le HARDI took up fighting positions on the spot, as their engines were out of order. Le BUFFLE[226]", a portuary tug, was hitched to Le RICHELIEU, which was also out of service, to rotate it on the spot if necessary, so that it can point his guns more effectively. The submarine Le PERSÉE went to

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[225] ●The word *Flak* is the abbreviation of die Flakartillerie (German for DCA, défense contre avion, or anti-aircraft artillery). « Flak » in German is the abbreviation of Flugabwehrkanone,

[226] ●A tugboat.

patrol the area between Yoff and Cambérène, defended by a single 155^{mm} battery. The submarine L'AJAX was assigned to the sector of Rufisque and M'Bour.

Until now, the guns had not been too vocal, because everything was in French ink, (*Free or Vichissois*)*, who were obviously reluctant to take each other as targets*. The English had only been spectators. But around 10:40 a.m., everything changed when Admiral Cunningham had the bad idea of sending a message forbidding the Dakar merchant ships to leave the port. This message would literally set the powder keg on fire.

Immediately, the coastal battery at Cape Manuel[227] began to pound the British fleet. Cunningham immediately sent the following message: "We are not firing on you. Why are you firing on us?" "Withdraw to 20 miles." replied the Dakar military command laconically. And the coastal batteries batteries continued firing.

The movements of the port were carefully monitored by aircrafts from the aircraft carrier The ARK ROYAL. They reported the movement of the two submarines. At about 10:50 a.m., Cunningham sent the destroyer The FORESIGHT and The INGLEFIELD to monitor the harbor area in general and these submarines in particular. But they were immediately targeted by the coastal batteries. The FORESIGHT was hit by a shell which put 16 men out of combat. The INGLEFLIED was also hit and both ships quickly retreated. A quarter of an hour later, the submarine Le PERSÉE crossed the port's nets and spotted a 1,000-ton British cruiser on which the coastal batteries of Gorée and Cape Manuel began to fire. Further south, Le PERSÉE spotted another English cruiser [light cruiser] which Le RICHELIEU began to target and on which Le PERSÉE fired two torpedoes.

Suddenly, the French submarine was hit and sank [at 11:30 a.m.] shortly after being evacuated by its crew which the

[227] ●Two big 240^{mm} guns.

aviso Le CALAIS picked up. It disappeared 2 or 3 km to east-northeast of the Cap-Manuel lighthouse.

A little further on, The FORESIGHT spotted and attacked the second submarine [L'AJAX], while the battleship BARHAM took advantage of the fog to attempt to neutralize the French battery at Cape Manuel, located 4,500 meters further. In the battle, The CUMBERLAND was hit on the port side by a French shell which damaged it[228], so much so that the English cruiser had to leave the battlefield. It was hit just above her battleship belt and (to make matters worse) its machinery was in turn put out of action by a 240^{mm} shell from the Cape-Manuel coastal battery.

L'AJAX's mission was cut short. This submarine was attacked by several British destroyers who prevented it from reaching the deeper waters to dive and shoot on a British warship. L'AJAX turned back, but planes attacked it and a bomb hit it. The crew made repairs and the submarine went to another sector where it was attacked again, so that it could not take the offensive. Finally, after having been grenaded around 6 pm, it managed to escape from the British.

The Charles Plan was later adopted by the Anglo-Gaullists. The General de Gaulle, who wanted to avoid a bloodbath between Frenchmen in this Civil War, tried a last appeal to Dakar. At 15:40, one of the batteries of Rufisque opened fire on Le SAVORGAN-DE-BRAZZA. The latter fired back. Vichy planes flew over the area to signal the position of the allied ships. At about 3:00 p.m., British planes had noted the presence of the light cruiser L'AUDACIEUX off the island of Gorée. This cruiser was threatening the Rufisque area. Immediately, a pack of British ships pounced on her: the destroyers FURY, The GREYHOUND and the cruiser AUSTRALIA. L'AUDACIEUX only had just time to launch two torpedoes in the direction of the cruiser The AUSTRALIA before being set on

[228] ●The number of killed is not known.

fire by the crossfire of the three warships. Her wreckage came ashore where it slowly burned away.

The Charles Plan, scheduled for 7:00 p.m., was finally cancelled at sunset. The British ships retreated to the high seas. The plan had been cancelled because, at Rufisque, even if the sea was calm and therefore favorable to a landing, not a single soldier had been landed. The two avisos, Le COMMANDANT-DUROC and Le COMMANDANT-DOMINÉ had been repulsed by a battery of 95^{mm} cannons and by machine guns served by a regiment of Tirailleurs Sénégalais.

Late at night, Admiral Cunningham and General Irwin warned De Gaulle that at 06:00 a.m. the next day, the fleet would destroy the defenses[229] to allow the "troupes de débarquement" to land, if the ultimatum, which this time was from the British, was again rejected by the Vichy French Great Headquarters.

At the appointed hour, the ultimatum was delivered to Governor General Boisson who rejected it once again. *Then General de Gaulle, who wanted to avoid a bloodbath between the already divided French, decided that the Free French Forces would not participate in the destruction announced by the British.*

September 24th

At dawn on the second day of this battle, the sea was rough. Visibility was still poor. The British were about to take action. As expected, the British ultimatum which clumsily accused the French of wanting to hand over Dakar to the Germans Nazis was totally ignored by the Vichy French Forces, who did not even respond to it. The morning was, from 6:00 a.m.[230] on, almost entirely occupied by a violent artillery and aerial bombardment. The English pounded the French defenses, which returned an extremely dense fire.

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[229] ●Ships and coastal batteries.
[230] ●Limit of acceptance of the ultimatum.

At dawn, the third French submarine[231] went out on a single engine. But her hull, still painted with minium[232], made her very visible. At about 8:05 a.m., the English destroyer The FORTUNE saw L'AJAX submarine maneuvering to attack the English battleships. The Englishman rushed at her and grenaded her until the damage forced the submarine to surface and surrender after being scuttled. The French crew was picked up as P.O.W. by The FORTUNE which had most likely saved many human lives by clearing the battlefield of this submarine whose torpedo launchers were ready for firing.

At 6 a.m. also, the bombers of the aircraft carrier ARK ROYAL received orders to attack the French coastal batteries, which were inflicting a lot of damage on the attackers and prevented the British from moving forward. Six Swordfish torpedo planes took charge of attacking Le RICHELIEU battleship, which, in a merciless battle, shot down three of them. Several Dakar destroyers deployed smoke screen across the harbor and in front of Le RICHELIEU.

The French cruisers had to maneuver between the 54 merchant ships anchored here and there in the Dakar harbor. Only one merchantman was burned, Le PORTHOS. As for the French warships, incredibly, they were not hit by any English bombs, either because of the smoke screen, or because of the deficiency of the English pilotes, with the exception of submarines, of course.

At times, French coastal batteries were attacked with bombs, cannons and machine guns, but by a miracle, none of the attacks destroyed a single one of them. The inaccuracy of the shots suggested that the Royal Navy's best gunners were fighting in other theaters of war. Off the coast of Rufisque where L'AUDACIEUX, abandoned by its crew, had drifted, The DEVONSHIRE and The AUSTRALIA bombarded the

[231] ●Le BÉVEZIERS, one of the engines was not working.
[232] ● Lead minium, Pb.O. used as a rust inhibitor. It is a reddish-orange pigment made up of lead oxide of lead, very visible at sea.

wreck for a long time not knowing that it was abandoned... and announced that they had damaged it!

At the beginning of the afternoon of this second day of battle, the English battleship BARHAM decided to direct its heavy guns on the French battleship Le RICHELIEU *at a distance of 15,500 meters* (A battle of Titans!) while the RESOLUTION attacked the island's coastal battery on the Isle-of-Gorée. Le RICHELIEU, whose engines were out of order, had anchored her stern and the tug Le BUFFLE was turning the battleship's bow to find the right direction for its artillery turrets. In spite of its maneuvering difficulties, Le RICHELIEU immediately fired back at The BATHAM, and, after two adjustment salvos, placed a 240^{mm} shell into the English battleship. In the next five minutes that followed, three 249^{mm} giant shells hit The BARHAM, twice below the waterline, creating serious waterways that were difficult to blind. This was too much for The BARHAM which, at 13:21, broke off the fight[233] and left the battlefield after having, with the RESOLUTION, fired *without success* nearly 400 shells (of 380^{mm}).

The RICHELIEU got away unscathed. If the English fire lacked precision, it was the city of Dakar which received several useless hits. Le PORTHOS [French marchantman] and the TACOMA [Danish merchantman], anchored in the harbor, were also hit by the 380 mm of the two British battleships.

At 15:34, nine Swordfish torpedo planes took off from The ARK ROYAL and attacked the French cruisers. But again, all the torpedoes missed their targets (!). The English seemed so incapacitated that some Anglophile Frenchmen wondered if the English artillerymen weren't doing it on purpose out of sympathy for their French allies. On the other hand, the cruisers' AAA[234] shot down two new British aircraft, bringing the total number to 8 the English losses of the day.

For various reasons, but mainly because of the precise fire of the French coastal artillery, this second day of battle was

[233] ●21 minutes after the beginning of the duel with Le RICHELIEU.
[234] ●Anti-Aircraft Artillery or Flak (from the German Flugabwehrkanone)

catastrophic for the Royal Navy. Admiral Cunningham and General Irwin held a Council of War; they decided to break off the battle and retreat to their respective bases. All the more so that they learned through the radio that the French Army had retaliated by violently bombarding the English base of Gibraltar; as after the attack on Mers el-Kébir. Moreover, another bad news, the French battleship Le STRASBOURG[235] had left Toulon in order to reinforce, if necessary, the French squadron in Dakar. It was the same battleship that had been bombarded by the British in the Mers El-Kébir trap, and was dreaming of returning the favor.

The mood was more like discouragement and humiliation on the British warships.

But because of the wireless radios, the Admirals were no longer the only masters on board after God. An imperative message arrived from Winston Churchill, ordering them to continue the battle: "Since we have begun, we must, I repeat WE MUST, go all the way. Do not back down from anything!"

September 25th

At dawn on September 25th, the battle resumed with rage. The British reconnaissance planes reported no change in the French Vichy Forces [Force Y]. French ships maneuvered in the harbor, changing positions to avoid becoming stationary targets. Only Le RICHELIEU did not move. The destroyers stood to windward ready to create a smoke screen, if necessary, to make the port invisible. The weather was now clear and the visibility perfect.

The British ships received the signal of the attack; same objectives as the day before. The English battleship BARHAM —which had plugged its waterways of the day before— gave the signal of the shelling at 8:57 a.m. when its powerful turrets opened the shelling. Unluckily for The BARHAM, it was right

[235] ●With its accompanying squadron.

on top of a *sound-location buoy*[236]. Le RICHELIEU was immediately informed of the BARHAM's precise position, 19 km from its guns. It opened fire. The British squadron was outside the French territorial waters [12 km]. One of The RICHELIEU's murderous shells hit a deserted post, without causing any human casualties. Luck seemed to favor the British more than the day before.

At the same time, The AUSTRALIA attacked the cruisers of French Admiral Lacroix, and The DEVONSHIRE began to pound the Cap-Manuel battery. Suddenly, after a few rounds of adjustment, the battleship Le RICHELIEU hit once again the battleship BARHAM. A few minutes later, the French battleship hit twice The AUSTRALIA. Seriously damaged, the battleship The RESOLUTION was enveloped by the destroyers FORESTER and INGLEFIELD in a cloud of smoke to hide, leave the battlefield and retreat.

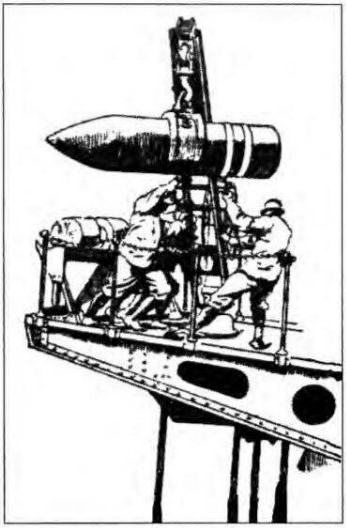
At 9:18 am, the fighters of the French Air Force shot down the Walrus from the AUSTRALIA. The FORESTER went to the scene of the combat to collect the survivors, but was forced to retreat under heavy French fire. Shortly before this event, the Captain Lancelot, who commanded the submarine Le BÉVEZIERS, spotted in his periscope several British battleships which approached him, unaware of the danger and surrounded by a cloud of escorting destroyers of escort. "FIRE!" Immediately, four torpedo boats dashed through the greenish water towards the RESOLUTION. The *submarine-alarm* was also given on board the two British battleships. The RESOLUTION and the BARHAM gave a violent blow of the helm; the latter succeeded in avoiding the projectiles, but the RESOLUTION could not get away from one of the four torpedoes which hit her on the port side, causing a serious gaping hole. It soon began to list 12%.

[236] ●In anticipation of an attack, the French had scattered *sound location buoys* all over the seascape to pinpoint the exact location of the English vessels and be able to strike them with precision.

Meanwhile, the French Air Force [Vichy], very active, had acquired air control. Navigating with difficulty at 1.0 knot, the battleship The RESOLUTION was attacked by French high-altitude bombers. Finally, The BARHAM took the latter[237] in tow and left the battlefield to head south, at a speed of 3 or 4 knots.

At 2:50 pm, the die had been cast. The British Admiral Cunningham, finally admitting defeat, decided to retreat to the south-west. Three days later, after being harassed by the French Air Force for a good part of the route, the British squadron finally anchored in Freetown.

Handling a 400mm shell in 1944.



Casualties & Losses

●**English** ●all large English units were badly damaged, and 35 men killed or wounded.

●the battleship RESOLUTION, gutted by a torpedo from the submarine Le BÉVEZIERS, left six months later for the United States where it was in repair for one year.

● the battleship BARHAM, damaged by Le RICHELIEU, was sunk on November 25th, 1941.

●the cruiser CUMBERLAND remained out of combat for 13 days. It left the battlefield and retreated to Bathurst in the Gambia enclave, where Vichy ordered this ship to be allowed in —and then out— despite the confines of the territorial waters.

●the cruiser FIJI was out of action for six months.

●the cruiser AUSTRALIA was damaged by two shells from Le RICHELIEU.

[237] ●It displayed a list of 12 % !

● the destroyer DRAGON, damaged.
●the destroyer INGLEFIELD, damaged.
● the destroyer FORESIGHT, damaged.
●15 aircrafts shot down.
● **French**: the submarines L'AJAX and Le PERSÉE were sunk. L'AUDACIEUX, heavily damaged, was refloated and tested for two years in repair before going into service.

Consequence of this Anglo-Allied defeat. For this allied defeat, Churchill had to suffer scathing criticisms from the House of Commons. But like a good politician, he found a scapegoat, Lord Dudley North, governor of Gibraltar, accused of having failed to block the road to the French squadron of Admiral Bourragué, which had come to reinforce the Dakar squadron. For De Gaulle, the Dakar Battle was also a problem. The FFF momentarily lost some of their credit with the allies. Dakar became from that moment a real stronghold. The outcome of this English failure was even more negative with regard to **gold**, the sinews of war; the stocks of the Banque de France, Belgium and Poland went to enrich the Nazi treasury in Switzerland with the gold and goods stolen from the Jews of Europe.

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